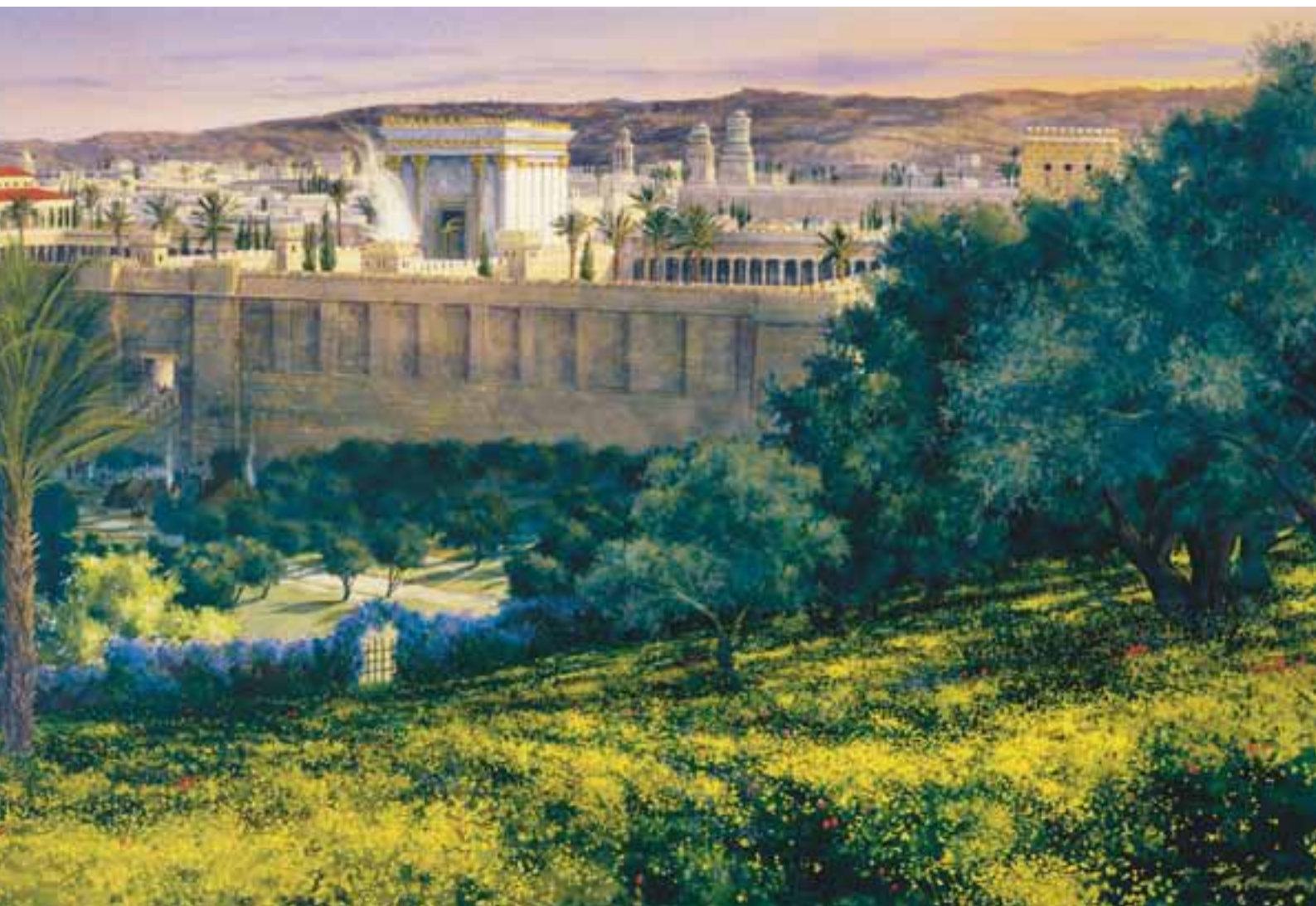


THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS • MARCH 2008

Ensign



The Lord
Jesus Christ



My Father's House, by Al Rounds

In about A.D. 33, this would have been the view of the temple and Antonia Fortress from the Garden of Gethsemane. Here we see the walls around the Old City of Jerusalem—as well as the hillside covered with wildflowers and olive trees.

WELCOME TO THIS SPECIAL ISSUE

When you read the scriptural accounts of His life and ministry, you realize how much Jesus Christ exemplified love. He healed and blessed. He looked past human frailty to see the heart—offering hope, healing, and forgiveness through His ministry, teachings, and great atoning sacrifice.

That same Savior, the Son of God, lives. He knows our hearts and loves us. He has compassion and desires

to bless us. That is the message of this magazine. You will find it in the words of living prophets and apostles, teaching who Christ is and what He offers us. And you will find it in the testimonies of ordinary people whose lives have been blessed by their accepting Christ's invitation to come unto Him, learn of Him, and follow Him.

We invite you to study these messages prayerfully, take them to heart, and share them with others.

—The editors



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and view material from this issue online
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Ensign

AN OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE CHURCH
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USING THIS ISSUE

Understanding the Titles of Jesus Christ. Throughout the scriptures, Jesus is known by many names. Some of them are discussed in this issue. How have you felt His love as a result of knowing His names and understanding what each means in your own life?

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We Testify of Jesus Christ



He is the central focus of our worship. He is the Lord who shall come again to reign on earth. He is our King, our Lord, our Master, the living Christ, who stands on the right hand of His Father.

BY PRESIDENT GORDON B. HINCKLEY

A little more than 2,000 years ago, the Redeemer of humankind was born in Bethlehem of Judea. While yet an infant He was brought to the temple in Jerusalem. There Mary and Joseph heard the wonderful prophecies spoken by Simeon and Anna about the tiny babe who was destined to become the Savior of the world.

He spent much of His boyhood in Nazareth of Galilee, and when 12 years of age He was brought to the temple again. Mary and Joseph found Him conversing with learned men, “and they were hearing him, and asking him questions” (Joseph Smith Translation, Luke 2:46).

Jesus grew into young manhood and “increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man” (Luke 2:52). He was baptized by John in the river Jordan “to fulfil all righteousness” (Matthew 3:15). He fasted for 40 days and nights and endured the temptations of Satan before He began His public ministry. He then went about teaching, healing, and blessing.

The Great Jehovah

Jesus was in very deed the great Jehovah of the Old Testament, who left His Father’s royal courts on high and condescended to come to earth as a babe born in the most humble of circumstances. His birth was foretold centuries earlier by Isaiah, who declared prophetically, “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace” (Isaiah 9:6).

This Jesus Christ of whom we solemnly testify is, as John the Revelator declared, “the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth.” He “loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever” (Revelation 1:5–6).

The Savior of the World

He was and is the Son of the Almighty. He was the only perfect man to walk the earth.



He fasted for 40 days and nights and endured the temptations of Satan before He began His public ministry. He then went about teaching, healing, and blessing. None can fully comprehend the splendor of His life, the majesty of His death, the universality of His gift to humankind.



He healed the sick and caused the lame to walk, the blind to see, the deaf to hear. He raised the dead. Yet He suffered His own life to be taken in an act of atonement, the magnitude of which is beyond our comprehension.

Luke records that this anguish was so great that “his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground” (Luke 22:44), a physical manifestation confirmed in both the Book of Mormon and the Doctrine and Covenants (see Mosiah 3:7; D&C 19:18). The suffering in Gethsemane and on the cross of Calvary, just a few hundred meters from Gethsemane, included both physical

and spiritual “temptations, . . . pain, . . . hunger, thirst, and fatigue, even more than man can suffer,” said King Benjamin, “except it be unto death” (Mosiah 3:7).

After the agony of Gethsemane came His arrest, His trials, His condemnation, then the unspeakable pain of His death on the cross, followed by His burial in Joseph’s tomb and the triumphant coming forth in the Resurrection. He, the lowly babe of Bethlehem who two millennia ago walked the dusty roads of the Holy Land, became the Lord Omnipotent, the King of kings, the Giver of salvation to all.

None can fully comprehend the splendor of His life, the majesty of His death, the universality of His gift to humankind. We unequivocally declare with the centurion who said at His death, “Truly this man was the Son of God” (Mark 15:39).

Our Living Lord

Such is the witness of the testament of the Old World, the Holy Bible. And there is another voice, that of the testament of the New World, the Book of Mormon. In it the Father introduced His resurrected Son, declaring, “Behold my Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, in whom I have glorified my name” (3 Nephi 11:7). This divine introduction opens the account of our Savior’s ministry among some of His “other sheep” (John 10:16) after His Ascension from Jerusalem. The Book of Mormon’s message throughout its length is of the divinity of Jesus Christ and of the eternal blessings that can come to all the sons and daughters of God through His redeeming love. In the words of one Book of Mormon prophet:

“For we labor diligently to write, to persuade our children, and also our brethren, to believe in Christ, and to be reconciled to God; for we know that it is by grace that we are saved, after all we can do. . . .

“And we talk of Christ, we rejoice in Christ, we preach of Christ, we prophesy of Christ, and we write according to our prophecies, that our children may know to what source they may look for a remission of their sins” (2 Nephi 25:23, 26).

Added to all of this is the declaration of modern prophets: “And now, after the many testimonies which have been given of him, this is the testimony, last of all, which we give of him: That he lives!” (D&C 76:22). In the Doctrine and Covenants, He testifies unequivocally of His own divine role: “I am Alpha and Omega, Christ the Lord; yea, even I am he, the beginning and the end, the Redeemer of the world” (D&C 19:1).

In Him we see not only our Master and Good Shepherd but also our great Exemplar, who bids us, “If thou wilt be perfect, . . . come and follow me” (Matthew 19:21).

The Cornerstone

He is the chief cornerstone of the Church that bears His name, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. There is no other name given among men whereby we can be saved (see Acts 4:12). He is the Author of our salvation, the Giver of eternal life (see Hebrews 5:9). There is none to equal Him. There never has been. There never will be. Thanks be to God for the gift of His Beloved Son, who gave His life that we might live and who is the chief, immovable cornerstone of our faith and His Church.

The Focus of Our Faith

We know not all that lies ahead of us. We live in a world of uncertainty. For some, there will be great accomplishment. For others, disappointment. For some, much of rejoicing and gladness, good health, and gracious living. For others, perhaps sickness and a measure of sorrow. We do not know. But one thing we do know. Like the Polar Star in the heavens, regardless of what the future holds, there stands the Redeemer of the world, the Son of God, certain and sure as the anchor of our immortal lives. He is the rock of our salvation, our strength, our comfort, the very focus of our faith.

In sunshine and in shadow we look to Him, and He is there to assure and smile upon us.

He is the central focus of our worship. He is the Son of the living God, the Firstborn of the Father, the Only Begotten in the flesh. He is “risen from the dead, . . . the firstfruits of them that slept” (1 Corinthians 15:20). He is the Lord who shall come again “to reign on the earth over his people” (D&C 76:63; see also Micah 4:7; Revelation 11:15).

None so great has ever walked the earth. None other has made a comparable sacrifice or granted a comparable blessing. He is the Savior and the Redeemer of the world. I believe in Him. I declare His divinity without equivocation or compromise. I love Him. I speak the name of Jesus Christ in reverence and wonder. He is our King, our Lord, our Master, the living Christ, who stands on the right hand of His Father. He lives! He lives, resplendent and wonderful, the living Son of the living God. ■

He Lives!

The Witness of Latter-day Prophets

“And now, after the many testimonies which have been given of him, this is the testimony, last of all, which we give of him: That he lives!” (D&C 76:22).

He lives!” So testified the Prophet Joseph Smith of the Savior Jesus Christ. With such certitude, all subsequent Presidents of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints—sustained as prophets, seers, and revelators—have testified of the Savior’s reality, divinity, Atonement, and Resurrection.

President Gordon B. Hinckley



“I know that I am not the head of this Church. The Lord Jesus Christ is its head. My mission, my chief responsibility,

my greatest honor comes in bearing solemn testimony of His living reality. Jesus Christ is the Son of God, who condescended to come into this world of misery, struggle, and pain, to touch

men’s hearts for good, to teach the way of eternal life, and to give Himself as a sacrifice for the sins of all mankind. He is ‘King of Kings and Lord of Lords, and He shall reign forever and ever’ (Handel’s *Messiah*). . . . I bear solemn witness that He lives and stands on the right hand of His Father.”¹

President Howard W. Hunter (1907–95)



“I am grateful . . . for my affiliation with a people who have a firm conviction that God lives, that Jesus is the Christ; and I

bear witness to you that the story of the babe born in the manger at Bethlehem is not a myth of the past, but that Jesus, the Son of God was born of Mary into mortality; that he

lived among men; that he died upon the cross and was resurrected; that he actually and truly lives today; and that he is a personal being and is the Savior of the world.”²

President Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994)



“The question is sometimes asked, ‘Are Mormons Christians?’ We declare the divinity of Jesus Christ.

We look to Him as the only source of our salvation. We strive to live His teachings, and we look forward to the time that He shall come again on this earth to rule and reign as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. In the words of a Book of Mormon prophet, we say to men today, ‘There [is] no other name



given nor any other way nor means whereby salvation can come unto the children of men, only in and through the name of Christ, the Lord Omnipotent' (Mosiah 3:17).³

**President Spencer W. Kimball
(1895–1985)**



"We place [Jesus Christ] on a pedestal as no other group I know of. To us he is not only the Son of God, he is also a God and we are subject to him. . . .

"No matter how much we say of him, it is still too little.

"He is not only the Carpenter, the Nazarene, the Galilean, but Jesus

Christ, the God of this earth, the Son of God, but most importantly, our Savior, our Redeemer. . . .

"I add my own testimony. I know that Jesus Christ is the Son of the living God and that he was crucified for the sins of the world.

"He is my friend, my Savior, my Lord, my God."⁴

**President Harold B. Lee
(1899–1973)**



"After a long night of searching and days of spiritual preparation that followed, I came to know as a witness more powerful than

sight, until I could testify with a

surety that defied all doubt, that I knew with every fiber of my soul that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, that He lived, He died, He was resurrected, and today He presides in the heavens, directing the affairs of this church, which bears His name because it preaches His doctrine. I bear that testimony humbly and leave you my witness."⁵

**President Joseph Fielding Smith
(1876–1972)**



"Salvation is in Christ. It comes because of the infinite and eternal atonement which he wrought by the shedding of his blood.

He is the Son of God, and he came into the world to ransom men from the temporal and spiritual death that came because of what we call the fall.

“Through his goodness and grace all men will come forth from the grave, to be judged according to the deeds done in the flesh. . . .

“I know that he lives, that he rules in the heavens above and in the earth beneath, and that his purposes shall prevail. He is our Lord and our God. As he himself said to Joseph Smith: ‘The Lord is God, and beside him there is no Savior’ (D&C 76:1).”⁶

**President David O. McKay
(1873–1970)**



“‘How can we know the way?’ asked Thomas, as he sat with his fellow apostles and their Lord at the table after the supper on the memorable night of betrayal; and Christ’s divine answer was: ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life. . . .’ (John 14:5–6.) And so he is! He is the source of our comfort, the inspiration of our life, the author of our salvation. If we want to know our relationship to God, we go to Jesus Christ. If we would know the truth of the immortality of the soul, we have it exemplified in the Savior’s resurrection. . . .

“ . . . He is the one Perfect Being who ever walked the earth; the sublimest example of nobility; Godlike in nature; perfect in his love; our

Redeemer; our Savior; the immaculate Son of our Eternal Father; the Light, the Life, the Way.”⁷

**President George Albert Smith
(1870–1951)**



“The Savior died that we might live. He overcame death and the grave and holds out to all who obey His teachings the hope of a glorious resurrection.”⁸

“I have found many in the world who have not known that we believe in the divine mission of our Lord, and I have been led to say upon more than one occasion that there are no people in the world who so well understand the divine mission of Jesus Christ, who so thoroughly believe him to have been the Son of God, who are so sanguine [confident] that at the present time he is enthroned in glory at the right hand of his Father, as the Latter-day Saints.”⁹

**President Heber J. Grant
(1856–1945)**



“To members of the Church throughout the world, and to peace-lovers everywhere, we say, behold in this Man of Galilee not merely a great Teacher, not merely a peerless Leader, but the Prince of Peace, the Author of

Salvation, here and now, literally and truly the Savior of the World!

“ . . . Jesus is the Redeemer of the world, the Savior of mankind, who came to the earth with a divinely appointed mission to die for the redemption of mankind. Jesus Christ is literally the Son of God, the Only Begotten in the flesh. He is our Redeemer, and we worship him.”¹⁰

**President Joseph F. Smith
(1838–1918)**



“The Holy Spirit of God has spoken to me—not through the ear, not through the eye, but to my spirit, to my living and eternal part,—and has revealed unto me that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. I testify to you that I know that my Redeemer lives. Furthermore, I know that I shall see Him on this earth, and that I shall see Him as He is. . . . The Lord has revealed this to me. He has filled my whole spirit with this testimony, until there is no room for doubt.”¹¹

**President Lorenzo Snow
(1814–1901)**



“That Being who dwelt in Heaven, who reigned there before the world was, who created the earth, and who, in the meridian

of time, came down to perfect and save that which He had created, has appeared to men in this age.”¹²

“We testify to the whole world that we know, by divine revelation, even through the manifestations of the Holy Ghost, that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God, and that he revealed himself to Joseph Smith as personally as he did to his apostles anciently, after he arose from the tomb, and that he made known unto him [the] heavenly truths by which alone mankind can be saved.”¹³

President Wilford Woodruff (1807–98)



“The object of Christ’s mission to the earth was to offer himself as a sacrifice to redeem mankind from eternal death. . . . He acted

strictly in obedience to his Father’s will in all things from the beginning, and drank of the bitter cup given him. Herein is brought to light, glory, honour, immortality, and eternal life, with that charity which is greater than faith or hope, for the Lamb of God has hereby performed that for man which [man] could not accomplish for himself. . . .

“There is no being that has power to save the souls of men and give them eternal life, except the Lord Jesus Christ, under the command of His Father.”¹⁴

President John Taylor (1808–87)



“Anointed, indeed, with the oil of gladness above His fellows, He struggled with and overcame the powers of men

and devils, of earth and hell combined; and aided by this superior power of the Godhead, He vanquished death, hell and the grave, and arose triumphant as the Son of God, the very eternal Father, the Messiah, the Prince of peace, the Redeemer, the Savior of the world; having finished and completed the work pertaining to the atonement, which His Father had given Him to do as the Son of God and the Son of man.”¹⁵

President Brigham Young (1801–77)



“I testify that Jesus is the Christ, the Savior and Redeemer of the world; I have obeyed his sayings, and realized his promise, and

the knowledge I have of him, the wisdom of this world cannot give, neither can it take away. . . .

“Our Lord Jesus Christ—the Savior, who has redeemed the world and all things pertaining to it, is the Only Begotten of the Father pertaining to the flesh. . . . He has tasted death for every man, and has paid the debt contracted by our first parents.”¹⁶

The Prophet Joseph Smith (1805–44)



“And this is the gospel, the glad tidings, which the voice out of the heavens bore record unto us—

“That he came into

the world, even Jesus, to be crucified for the world, and to bear the sins of the world, and to sanctify the world, and to cleanse it from all unrighteousness;

“That through him all might be saved whom the Father had put into his power and made by him” (D&C 76:40–42). ■

NOTES

1. *Teachings of Gordon B. Hinckley* (1997), 285–86.
2. *The Teachings of Howard W. Hunter*, ed. Clyde J. Williams (1997), 4.
3. *The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson* (1988), 10.
4. *The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, ed. Edward L. Kimball (1982), 7; see also *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Spencer W. Kimball* (2006), 23, 25.
5. *The Teachings of Harold B. Lee*, ed. Clyde J. Williams (1996), 637.
6. “I Know That My Redeemer Liveth,” *Ensign*, Dec. 1971, 26–27.
7. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: David O. McKay* (2003), 3–4, 5.
8. “Testimony of Elder George Albert Smith,” *Liabona: The Elders’ Journal*, Feb. 2, 1915, 502.
9. “Divine Calling of Prophet Joseph Smith Reviewed in Connection with Mission of Redeemer of World,” *Deseret News*, Dec. 27, 1924, sec. 3, p. 6.
10. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Heber J. Grant* (2002), 223.
11. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph F. Smith* (1998), 7.
12. In *Journal History*, Apr. 5, 1884, 9.
13. In *Deseret News*, Jan. 31, 1877, 834.
14. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Wilford Woodruff* (2004), 69–70, 74.
15. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: John Taylor* (2001), 43–44.
16. *Discourses of Brigham Young*, sel. John A. Widtsoe (1941), 26.



Who Is Jesus Christ?

BY PRESIDENT BOYD K. PACKER

Acting President of the Quorum
of the Twelve Apostles

Meeting with the Twelve at Caesarea Philippi, Jesus asked, “Whom say ye that I am?” Simon Peter, the chief Apostle answered, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Matthew 16:15–16). Peter later testified that Jesus “was fore-ordained before the foundation of the world” (1 Peter 1:20). He was “in the beginning with the Father, and [is] the Firstborn” (D&C 93:21).

When the Father’s plan—the plan of salvation and happiness (see Alma 34:9)—was presented (see Alma 42:5, 8), one was required to atone to provide redemption and mercy to all those who accepted the plan (see Alma 34:16; 39:18; 42:15). The Father asked, “Whom shall I send?” He who was to be known as Jesus freely and willingly chose to answer, “Here am I, send me” (Abraham 3:27). “Father, thy will be done, and the glory be thine forever” (Moses 4:2).

In preparation, the earth was created: “By the Son I created [the earth], which is mine Only Begotten,” declared the Father (Moses 1:33; see also Ephesians 3:9; Helaman 14:12; Moses 2:1).

Titles of Jesus Christ

He was known as Jehovah by the Old Testament prophets (see Abraham 1:16; Exodus 6:3). The prophets were shown of His coming: “Behold the Lamb of God, yea, even the Son of the Eternal Father!” (1 Nephi 11:21; see also John 1:14). His mother was told, “Call his name Jesus. . . . He shall be . . . called the Son of the Highest” (Luke 1:31–32).

Many titles and names are descriptive of His divine mission and ministry. He Himself taught: “I am the light and the life of the world. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end” (3 Nephi 9:18). “I am . . . your advocate with the Father” (D&C 29:5; see also D&C 110:14). “I am the good shepherd” (John 10:11). “I am Messiah, the King of Zion, the Rock of Heaven” (Moses 7:53). “I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger [or] thirst” (John 6:35). “I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman” (John 15:1). “I am the resurrection, and the life” (John 11:25). “I am . . . the bright and morning star” (Revelation 22:16), “Jesus Christ, your Redeemer, the Great I Am” (D&C 29:1).

He is the Mediator (see 1 Timothy 2:5), the Savior (see Luke 2:11), the Redeemer (see D&C 18:47), the Head of the Church (see Ephesians 5:23), its Chief Cornerstone



*He is our Lord,
our Redeemer, the
Messiah, the King
of Zion, the Rock
of Heaven. He
ransomed us with
His blood.*

CHRISTUS, BY BERTEL THORVALDSEN;
PHOTOGRAPH OF EARTH © CORBIS
IMAGES



(see Ephesians 2:20). At the last day, “God shall judge . . . men by Jesus Christ according to [the] gospel” (Romans 2:16; see also Mormon 3:20).

“God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son” (John 3:16); “wherefore, redemption cometh in and through the Holy Messiah; for he is full of grace and truth” (2 Nephi 2:6).

The Prophet Joseph Smith was often asked, “What are the fundamental principles of your religion?”

“The fundamental principles of our religion are the testimony of the Apostles and Prophets, concerning Jesus Christ, that He died, was buried, and rose again the third day, and ascended into heaven; and all other things which pertain to our religion are only appendages to it.”¹

Humility of Jesus Christ

At the time of His arrest before His Crucifixion, the Lord had come from Gethsemane. At the moment of betrayal,

Peter drew his sword against Malchus, a servant of the high priest. Jesus said:

“Put up again thy sword into his place. . . .

“Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?” (Matthew 26:52–53).

During all of the taunting, abuse, scourging, and final torture of crucifixion, the Lord remained silent and submissive—except, that is, for one moment of intense drama which reveals the very essence of Christian doctrine. That moment came during the trial. Pilate, now afraid, said to Jesus: “Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee?” (John 19:10).

One can only imagine the quiet majesty when the Lord spoke: “Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above” (John 19:11). What happened thereafter did not come because Pilate had power to impose it but because the Lord had the will to accept it.

“I lay down my life,” the Lord said, “that I might take it again.

“No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again” (John 10:17–18).

Atonement of Jesus Christ

Before the Crucifixion and afterward, many men have willingly given their lives in selfless acts of heroism. But none faced what Christ endured. Upon Him was the burden of all human transgression, all human guilt. And hanging in the balance was the Atonement. Through His willing act, mercy and justice could be reconciled, eternal law sustained, and that mediation achieved without which mortal man could not be redeemed.

He by choice accepted the penalty in behalf of all mankind for the sum total of all wickedness and depravity; for brutality, immorality, perversion, and corruption; for

addiction; for the killings and torture and terror—for all of it that ever had been or all that ever would be enacted upon this earth. In so choosing He faced the awesome power of the evil one, who was not confined to flesh nor subject to mortal pain. That was Gethsemane!

How the Atonement was wrought we do not know. No mortal watched as evil turned away and hid in shame before the Light of that pure being. All wickedness could not quench that Light. When what was done was done, the ransom had been paid. Both death and hell forsook their claim on all who would repent. Men at last were free. Then

every soul who ever lived could choose to touch that Light and be redeemed.

By this infinite sacrifice, “through [this] Atonement of Christ, all mankind may be saved, by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the Gospel” (Articles of Faith 1:3).

*“I am the good shepherd”
(John 10:11).*



“Atonement” in Scripture

The English word *atonement* is really three words: *at-one-ment*, which means to set at one; one with God; to reconcile, to conciliate, to expiate.

But did you know that the word *atone-ment* appears only once in the English New Testament? Only once! I quote from Paul’s letter to the Romans:

“Christ died for us.

“ . . . We were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

“And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the *atonement*” (Romans 5:8, 10–11; emphasis added).

Only that once does the word *atonement* appear in the English New Testament. *Atonement*, of all words! It was not an unknown word, for it had been used much in the Old Testament in connection with the law of Moses, but once only in the New Testament. I find that to be remarkable.

I know of only one explanation. For that we turn to the Book of Mormon. Nephi testified that the Bible once

“contained the fulness of the gospel of the Lord, of whom the twelve apostles bear record” and that “after [the words] go forth by the hand of the twelve apostles of the Lamb, from the Jews unto the Gentiles, thou seest the formation of that great and abominable church, which is most abominable above all other churches; for behold, they have taken away from the gospel of the Lamb many parts which are plain and most precious; and also many covenants of the Lord have they taken away” (1 Nephi 13:24, 26).

Jacob defined the great and abominable church in these words: “Wherefore, he that fighteth against Zion, both Jew and Gentile, both bond and free, both male and female, shall perish; for they are they who are the whore of all the earth; for they who are not for me are against me, saith our God” (2 Nephi 10:16).

Nephi also said, “Because of the many plain and precious things which have been taken out of the book, . . . an exceedingly great many do stumble, yea, insomuch that Satan hath great power over them” (1 Nephi 13:29). He then prophesied that the precious things would be restored (see 1 Nephi 13:34–35).

And they were restored. In the Book of Mormon the word *atone* in form and tense appears 39 times. I quote but one verse from Alma: “And now, the plan of mercy could not be brought about except an *atonement* should be made; therefore God himself *atoneth* for the sins of the world, to bring about the plan of mercy, to appease the demands of justice, that God might be a perfect, just God, and a merciful God also” (Alma 42:15; emphasis added).

Only once in the New Testament but 39 times in the Book of Mormon. What better witness that the Book of Mormon is indeed another testament of Jesus Christ?

And that is not all. The words *atone*, *atoneth*, and *atonement* appear in the Doctrine and Covenants five

times and in the Pearl of Great Price twice. Forty-seven references of transcendent importance. And that is not all! Hundreds of other verses help to explain the Atonement.

Agency

The cost of the Atonement was borne by the Lord without compulsion, for agency is a sovereign principle. According to the plan, agency must be honored. It was so from the beginning, from Eden.

“The Lord said unto Enoch: Behold these thy brethren; they are the workmanship of mine own hands, and I gave unto them their knowledge, in the day I created them; and in the Garden of Eden, gave I unto man his agency” (Moses 7:32).

Whatever else happened in Eden, in his supreme

moment of testing, Adam made a choice. After the Lord commanded Adam and Eve to multiply and replenish the earth and commanded them *not* to partake of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, He said, “Nevertheless, thou mayest choose for thyself, for it is given unto thee; but, remember that I forbid it, for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die” (Moses 3:17).

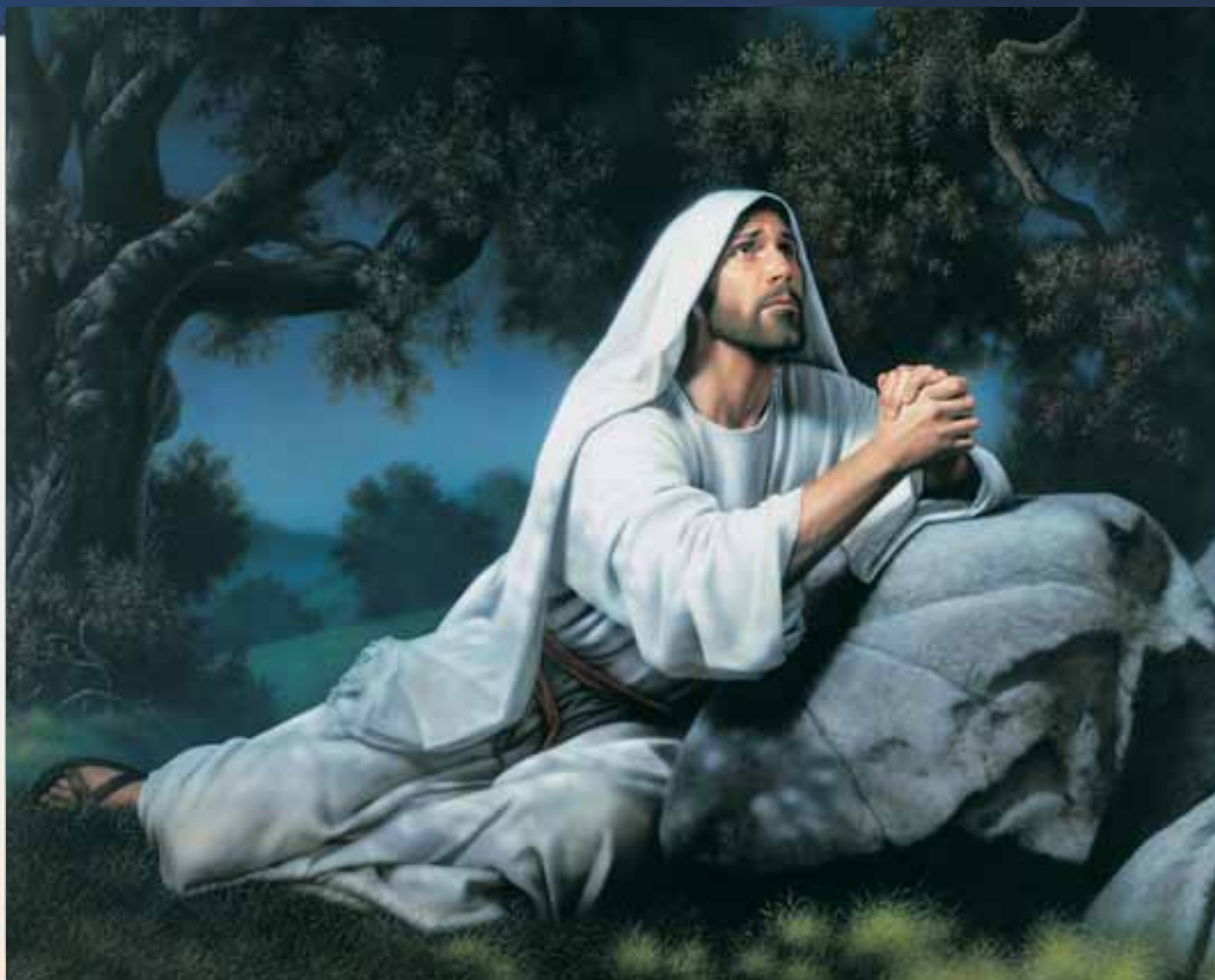
There was too much at issue to introduce man into mortality by force. That would contravene the very law essential to the plan. The plan provided that each spirit child of God would receive a mortal body and each would be tested. Adam saw

that it must be so and made his choice. “Adam fell that men might be; and men are, that they might have joy” (2 Nephi 2:25).

Adam and Eve ventured forth to multiply and replenish the earth as they had been commanded to do. The creation of their bodies in the image of God, as a separate creation, was crucial to the plan. Their subsequent Fall

*“I am your
advocate with
the Father”
(D&C 110:4).*





was essential if the condition of mortality was to exist and the plan to proceed.

Necessity of the Atonement

Nephi described what would happen to our bodies and our spirits except “an infinite atonement” was made. “Our spirits,” he said, “must have become like unto [the devil].” (See 2 Nephi 9:7–10.)

I seldom use the word *absolutely*. It seldom fits. I use it now—twice:

Because of the Fall, the Atonement was *absolutely* essential for resurrection to proceed and overcome mortal death.

The Atonement was *absolutely* essential for men to cleanse themselves from sin and overcome the second death, spiritual

death, which is separation from our Father in Heaven, for the scriptures tell us eight times that no unclean thing may enter the presence of God (see 1 Nephi 10:21; 15:34; Alma 7:21; 11:37; 40:26; Helaman 8:25; 3 Nephi 27:19; Moses 6:57).

Those scriptural words, “Thou mayest choose for thyself, for it is given unto thee” (Moses 3:17), introduced Adam and Eve and their posterity to all the risks of mortality. In mortality men are free to choose, and each choice begets a consequence. The choice Adam made energized the law of justice, which required that the penalty for disobedience would be death.

But those words spoken at the trial, “Thou couldst have no power at all against





me, except it were given thee from above” (John 19:11), proved mercy was of equal rank. A redeemer was sent to pay the debt and set men free. That was the plan.

Alma’s son Corianton thought it unfair that penalties must follow sin, that there need be punishment. In a profound lesson, Alma taught the plan of redemption to his son and so to us. Alma spoke of the Atonement and said, “Now, repentance could not come unto men except there were a punishment” (Alma 42:16).

If punishment is the price repentance asks, it comes at bargain price. Consequences, even painful ones, protect us. So simple a thing as a child’s cry of pain when his finger touches fire can teach us that. Except for the pain, the child might be consumed.

Blessings of Repentance

I readily confess that I would find no peace, neither happiness nor safety, in a world without repentance. I do not

know what I should do if there were no way for me to erase my mistakes. The agony would be more than I could bear. It may be otherwise with you, but not with me.

The Atonement was made. Ever and always it offers amnesty from transgression and from death if we will but repent. Repentance is the escape clause in it all. Repentance is the key with which we can unlock the prison from inside. We hold that key within our hands, and agency is ours to use it.

How supernally precious freedom is; how consummately valuable is agency.

Lucifer in clever ways manipulates our choices, deceiving us about sin and consequences. He and his angels tempt us to be unworthy, even wicked. But he cannot—in all eternity he cannot, with all his power he cannot—completely destroy us, not without our own consent. Had agency come to man without the Atonement, it would have been a fatal gift.

Created in His Image

We are taught in Genesis, in Moses, in Abraham, in the Book of Mormon, and in the endowment that man's mortal body was made in the image of God in a separate creation. Had the Creation come in a different way, there could have been no Fall.

If men were merely animals, then logic favors freedom without accountability.

How well I know that among learned men are those who look down at animals and stones to find the origin of man. They do not look inside themselves to find the spirit there. They train themselves to measure things by time, by thousands and by millions, and say these animals called men all came by chance. And this they are free to do, for agency is theirs.

But agency is ours as well. We look up, and in the universe we see the handiwork of God and measure things by epochs, by aeons, by dispensations, by eternities. The many things we do not know, we take on faith.

But this we know! It was all planned "before the world was" (D&C 38:1; see also D&C 49:17; 76:13, 39; 93:7; Abraham 3:22–25). Events from the Creation to the final, winding-up scene are not based on *chance*; they are based on *choice*! It was planned that way.

This we know! This simple truth! Had there been no Creation and no Fall, there should have been no need for any Atonement, neither a Redeemer to mediate for us. Then Christ need not have been.

Symbols of the Atonement

At Gethsemane and Golgotha, the Savior's blood was shed. Centuries earlier the Passover had been introduced as a symbol and a type of things to come. It was an ordinance to be kept forever. (See Exodus 12.)

When the plague of death was decreed upon Egypt,

each Israelite family was commanded to take a lamb—firstborn, male, without blemish. This paschal lamb was slain without breaking any bones, its blood to mark the doorway of the home. The Lord promised that the angel of death would *pass over* the homes so marked and not slay those inside. They were saved by the blood of the lamb.

After the Crucifixion of the Lord, the law of sacrifice required no more shedding of blood. For that was done, as Paul taught the Hebrews, "once for all . . . one sacrifice for sins for ever" (Hebrews 10:10, 12). The sacrifice thenceforth was to be a broken heart and a contrite spirit—repentance.

And the Passover would be commemorated forever as the sacrament, in which we renew our covenant of baptism and partake in remembrance of the body of the Lamb of God and of His blood, which was shed for us.

It is no small thing that this symbol reappears in the Word of Wisdom. Beyond the promise that Saints in this generation who obey will receive health and great treasures of knowledge is this: "I, the Lord, give unto them a promise, that the destroying angel shall pass by them, as the children of Israel, and not slay them" (D&C 89:21).

I cannot with composure tell you how I feel about the Atonement. It touches the deepest emotion of gratitude and obligation. My soul reaches after Him who wrought it—this Christ, our Savior, of whom I am a witness. I testify of Him. He is our Lord, our Redeemer, our Advocate with the Father. He ransomed us with His blood.

Humbly I lay claim upon the Atonement of Christ. I find no shame in kneeling down in worship of our Father and His Son. For *agency* is mine, and this I *choose* to do! ■

NOTE

1. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 49.



“I Am the Way”

The Savior taught important lessons when He said, “I am . . .”

BY DAVID A. EDWARDS
Church Magazines

Sometimes the most memorable experiences with the scriptures come from having patterns suddenly stand out to you while you’re reading. For example, did it ever strike you how often the Gospel of John mentions that Jesus said the words “I am”? When Jesus said this, He was usually making a comparison in order to teach people who He is and what He does for them. Look closely at some of these comparisons, and you’ll learn a lot about the Savior.

The Bread of Life

“I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. . . . I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever” (John 6:35, 51).

The Feast of the Passover commemorates the Israelites’ deliverance from Egypt and includes the eating of unleavened bread. As this celebration drew near, Jesus performed the miracle of feeding the 5,000. Many who saw this miracle followed Him because He had given them food, so He taught them to seek for the food “which endureth unto everlasting life” (John 6:27). He then taught them about manna, reminding them that it came from heaven to feed the Israelites in the wilderness. He



declared, “I am the bread of life,” telling them of the spiritual nourishment Heavenly Father sent through Him, as well as the promise of eternal life He brought.

At a later Passover feast, Jesus used bread to signify His body as part of the sacrament. When we partake of the bread each week during the sacrament, we are reminded of Jesus Christ—His sacrifice, His Resurrection, and the promise of constant spiritual nourishment through the companionship of His Spirit.

The Light of the World

“I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life” (John 8:12).

Jesus called Himself the Light of the World at the time of the Feast of Tabernacles. Each night during this feast the temple lights were lit to symbolize the Light of God, which is sent out to the world. John declared that Jesus “was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world” (John 1:9). And through the Prophet Joseph Smith, the Lord revealed that the Light of Christ “is through him



who enlighteneth your eyes, which is the same light that



quickeneth your understandings” and which “giveth life to all things [and] is the law by which all things are governed” (D&C 88:11, 13).

Our minds and spirits are illuminated through Jesus Christ. His light guides our path, helping us tell the difference between good and evil and showing us the way to eternal life.

The Vine

“I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing” (John 15:5).



Jesus compared Himself to the main vine of a grapevine. This main vine not only keeps the whole plant rooted to the ground, but it also nourishes all of the smaller vines, which branch off from it and bear fruit.

Jesus Christ is our anchor of hope and our source of spiritual nourishment and growth. Through Him we gain the strength we need to live righteously and perform good works. He is also the foundation of the Church and the source of its authority to preach the gospel and branch out into all the world.

The Good Shepherd

“I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine” (John 10:14).

The main duties of a shepherd are to lead the sheep to

food and water and to return them to the safety of the fold. A shepherd also protects the sheep from dangers such as wild animals and thieves. Because he knows his flock, he can tell when a sheep is missing, and then he goes to find it. His sheep are submissive to him and trust him completely.

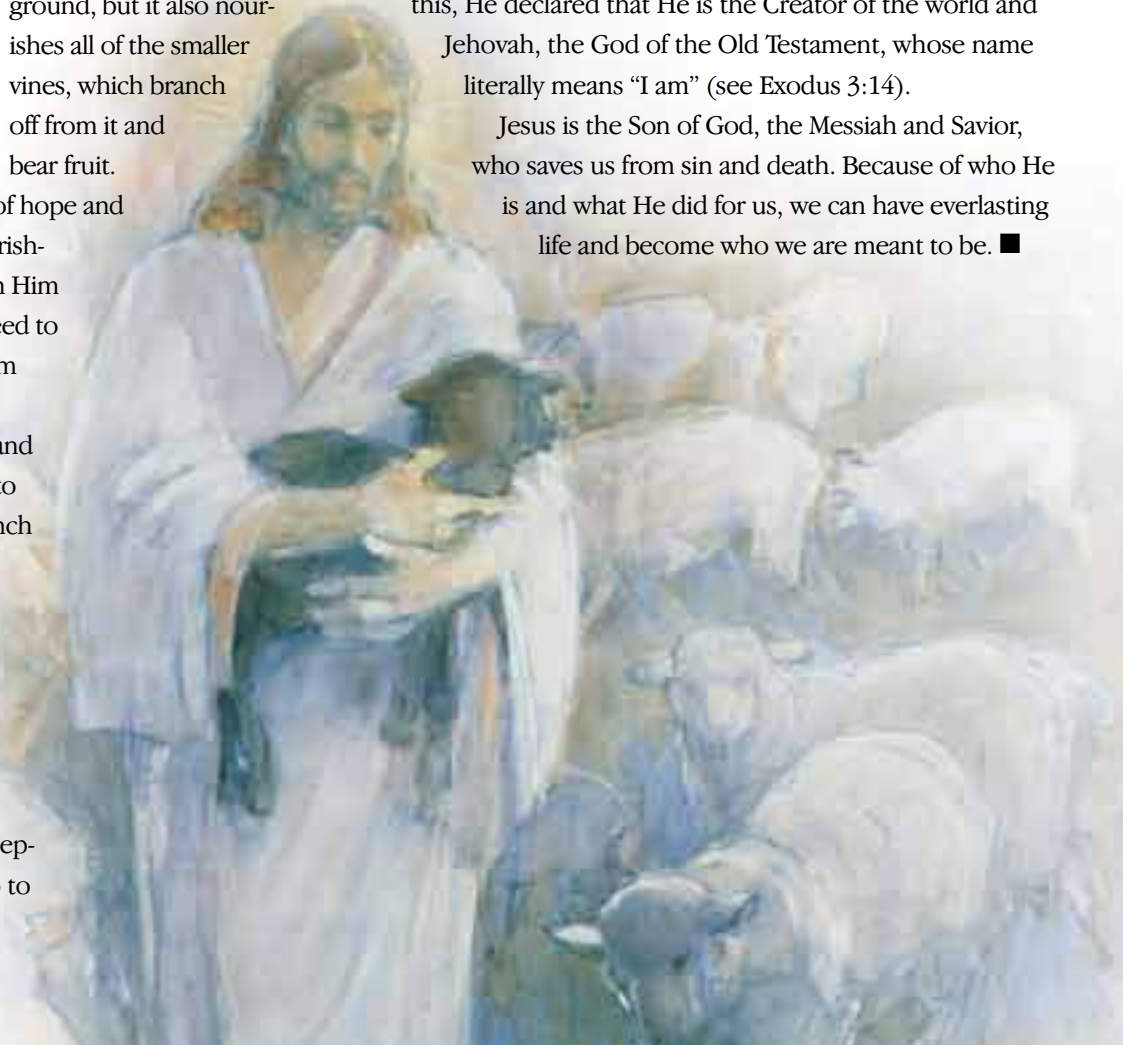
Jesus, the Good Shepherd, calls out to us when we stray, and if we learn to heed His voice, He leads us to the safe pastures of salvation and eternal life, protecting us from the dangers of death and sin.

“I Am”

“Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am” (John 8:58).

In a way, simply by saying, “I am,” Jesus said it all. With this, He declared that He is the Creator of the world and Jehovah, the God of the Old Testament, whose name literally means “I am” (see Exodus 3:14).

Jesus is the Son of God, the Messiah and Savior, who saves us from sin and death. Because of who He is and what He did for us, we can have everlasting life and become who we are meant to be. ■



“WHOM SAY YE THAT I AM?”

The Savior asked His disciples this question, and Peter answered, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God” (see Matthew 16:15–16). Here’s how teens and young adults from around the world answer this same question:

Jesus Christ has done a lot for me. He has given me my family and the gospel. He’s helped me in my studies. I’ve received several scholarships, and I believe these were blessings from Him. If He hadn’t come to show us how to live, we wouldn’t be able to return to our Heavenly Father.

Bryan N., 13, Honduras

I know that through the Savior’s suffering, death, and Atonement, we can be resurrected and we can be redeemed spiritually and physically. Because of faith and repentance, I have learned that we can be forgiven of our sins.

Joan O., 19, Philippines

A long time ago a man walked this earth, a man whose actions and words have touched millions of lives—including mine. He is Jesus Christ. His atoning sacrifice continues to influence my life every day. How amazing it is to know that through His wounds, our own wounds can be healed. Because I know that Jesus is the Christ, I am preparing to serve a full-time mission and spread His gospel to the people of the world who have not yet felt of His endless love. He is the Savior and Redeemer of my soul.

Kristian M., 24, Croatia



Jesus Christ has done for us what no one else could do. For me, obtaining the Aaronic Priesthood was a wonderful moment because I knew it was what the Lord wanted me to do. I was following His example. I know that He will continue to lead me and teach me the way.

Limhi G., 17, Mexico

After my mother passed away, life began to feel too much to bear. I finally turned to my bishop for advice. What he told me wasn’t exactly what I expected, but it changed my life. He invited me to rely on Heavenly Father by praying, reading the scriptures, and trusting that the Savior

would be there for me—trusting Him so much that I would feel my burdens become lighter. Two and a half years later, I know that there is a constant peace available to all of us because of who our Savior is and what He did for us.

Whitney W., 19, Arizona, USA

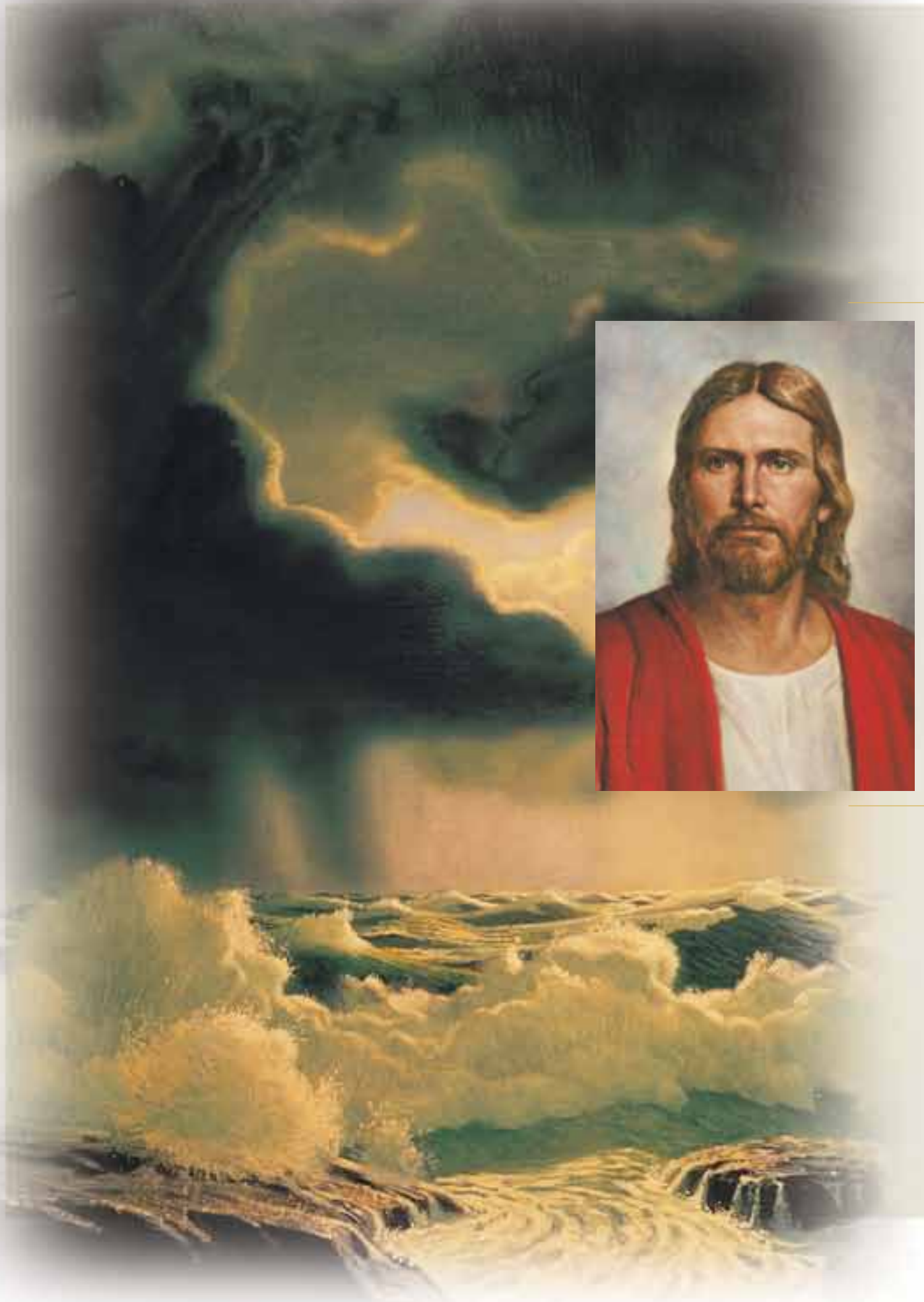
I know that Jesus Christ lives. He loves me, and He gave His life for me. He is my friend. By His teachings, I learn how to be like Him. He is just, kind, perfect, and charitable. He suffered in Gethsemane for everyone. I know He is the Living Christ, my Savior, my Rock, and my Lord.

Claudia R., 25, Mexico

Growing up in the Church and going to Primary, I have learned about Jesus Christ from when I was a little girl. And my testimony has grown stronger since then. Now that I’m on a mission, I love having the opportunity to share the gospel and testify of Jesus Christ every day.

As I think of the Savior and all the things He has done for me, I want to be closer to Him. I’m personalizing the things I learned as a child. I love being able to help other people feel the love of our Savior Jesus Christ. This testimony is not just something I say—it comes from my heart.

Susana V., 21, Tonga



Faith in Jesus Christ

BY ELDER RUSSELL M. NELSON
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

My long road to become a doctor of medicine was only the beginning. After that came years of hospital work, research, specialty training, and certifying examinations. Then followed many years of teaching, service, and the challenges of the newly emerging field of open-heart surgery, all of which brought me to a profound reverence for the structure and function of the human body. I was convinced that its creation was divine.

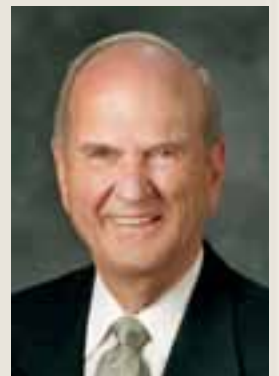
The Remarkable Human Body

Think of the genesis of a human body. It begins with the union of two reproductive cells—one from the mother and one from the father. Together, these cells contain all of the new individual's hereditary information, stored in a space so small it cannot be seen by the naked eye. Twenty-three chromosomes from each parent unite in one new cell. These chromosomes contain thousands of genes which determine the physical characteristics of the unborn person. Approximately 22 days

after these cells unite, a tiny heart begins to beat. At 26 days, blood begins to circulate. Cells multiply and divide. Some become eyes that see; others become ears that hear or fingers that feel the wondrous things about us.

Each organ is an amazing creation. The eye has a self-focusing lens. Nerves and muscles allow two eyes to make a single three-dimensional image. The ear converts sound waves into audible tones perceived in the brain.

The heart has four delicate valves that control the direction of blood flow. They open and close more than 100,000 times a day—36 million times a year. Unless altered by disease, they are able to withstand this stress almost indefinitely. No man-made material can be flexed so frequently and so long without breaking. Each day, the adult heart pumps enough fluid to fill a 2,000-gallon (7,570-L) tank. At the crest of the heart is a source of electricity that transmits energy down special lines, causing myriads of muscle fibers to work together.



Dynamic faith in the Lord leads to complete conversion and a consummate commitment to His holy work.

LIVING HIS COMMANDMENTS

Jesus Christ is the true path, the Bread of Life. He it is who gave beauty to all creation for the benefit and sustenance of mankind. He is the greatest among all of God's creations, the Only Begotten Son in the flesh and the Firstborn in the spirit. Through Him, the Father has shown His great love for all.

Throughout my life I have received many, many blessings through my faith in Jesus Christ and especially in the sacred Atonement—the Lord's most sublime deed. I try to show the love I feel for Him by living His commandments.

At this time my wife and I are representatives of Jesus Christ, serving a full-time mission for Him. It is a marvelous joy to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and to invite people to come unto Him and accept Him as their Savior.

Fiorino Berardo, Argentina

Think of the body's backup systems. Each *paired* organ has instant backup available from the other of the pair. *Single* organs, such as the brain, the heart, and the liver, are nourished by *two* routes of blood supply. This protects the organ if blood flow should be impeded through one of those routes.

Think of the body's capacity to defend itself. To protect it from harm, the body perceives pain. In response to infection, it generates antibodies. They not only help to combat an immediate problem, but they persist to bolster resistance to any future infection.

Think how the body repairs itself. Broken bones mend and become strong again. Skin lacerations heal themselves. A leak in the circulation can seal itself. The body renews its own outdated cells.

The body regulates its own vital ingredients. Levels of essential elements and constituents are adjusted continuously. And regardless of wide fluctuations in temperature of the environment, the temperature of the body is carefully controlled within narrow bounds.

Through years of experience, I have learned that healing occurs only when all of the laws relevant to that

blessing are obeyed.¹ The structure and function of the body are governed by law. A verse of scripture so states: "Unto every kingdom is given a law; and unto every law there are certain bounds also and conditions."²

Scientists in many disciplines observe similar manifestations of law and order, whether in the predictability of the tides, the phases of the moon, or the location of stars in the sky. Such law and order undergird all creation. Those laws can be discovered and defined. Their consequences can be measured. Such order bears witness of a Supreme Creator.³

WHAT IS FAITH?

"If ye have faith," Alma taught, "ye hope for things which are not seen, which are true" (Alma 32:21).

Faith is a principle of action and power. When you work toward a worthy goal, you exercise faith. You show your hope for something that you cannot yet see.

Faith in Jesus Christ can motivate you to follow His perfect example (see John 14:12). It can lead you to do good works, obey the commandments, and repent of your sins (see James 2:18;

1 Nephi 3:7; Alma 34:17).

Having faith in Him means relying completely on Him—trusting in His infinite power, intelligence, and love.

It includes believing His teachings. It means believing that even though we do not understand all things, He does.

In order for faith to lead to salvation, it must be centered in the Lord (see Acts 4:10–12; Mosiah 3:17). You exercise faith in Christ when you have (1) an assurance that He exists, (2) a correct idea of His character, and (3) a knowledge that you are striving to live according to His will.

From True to the Faith (2004), "Faith," 54–56.



The matter of faith, on the other hand, cannot be measured. But the correlation of faith in God with the law and order of the universe is revealed in scripture:

“[God] hath given a law unto all things, by which they move in their times and their seasons;

“And their courses are fixed, even the courses of the heavens and the earth, which comprehend the earth and all the planets. . . .

“Behold, all these are kingdoms, and any man who hath seen any or the least of these hath seen God moving in his majesty and power.”⁴

Divinity of the Creation

Scriptures declare that heaven, earth, and all things upon the earth are divinely created.⁵ Scriptures also help us to know more about the partnership of God and His Son, Jesus Christ, in the Creation. The first words in the Bible state, “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth,”⁶ and, “God created man in his own image, . . . male and female created he them.”⁷ The book of Abraham teaches that “the Gods went down to organize man in their own image, in the image of the Gods to form they him, male and female to form they them.”⁸

Scripture records the feelings of Heavenly Father for His Beloved Son and for each human being: “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that

whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”⁹

The book of John begins with this declaration:

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

“The same was in the beginning with God.

“All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.”¹⁰

This scripture denotes that the Word¹¹ of God is Jesus Christ—God’s personal minister in the government of this universe and Creator of all life.

This fact was affirmed to Moses by our Heavenly Father, who said:

“And by the word of my power, have I created them [the earth and the individuals on it], which is mine Only Begotten Son, who is full of grace and truth.

“And worlds without number have I created;

Law and order undergird all creation, whether manifested in the predictability of the tides, the phases of the moon, or the location of stars in the sky. Such order bears witness of a Supreme Creator.



and I also created them for mine own purpose; and *by the Son I created them*, which is mine Only Begotten.”¹²

Many other scriptures confirm that, under direction of the Father, Jesus Christ is the Creator.¹³ One of the most compelling is His own personal testimony: “Behold, I am Jesus Christ the Son of God. I created the heavens and the earth, and all things that in them are. I was with the Father from the beginning.”¹⁴

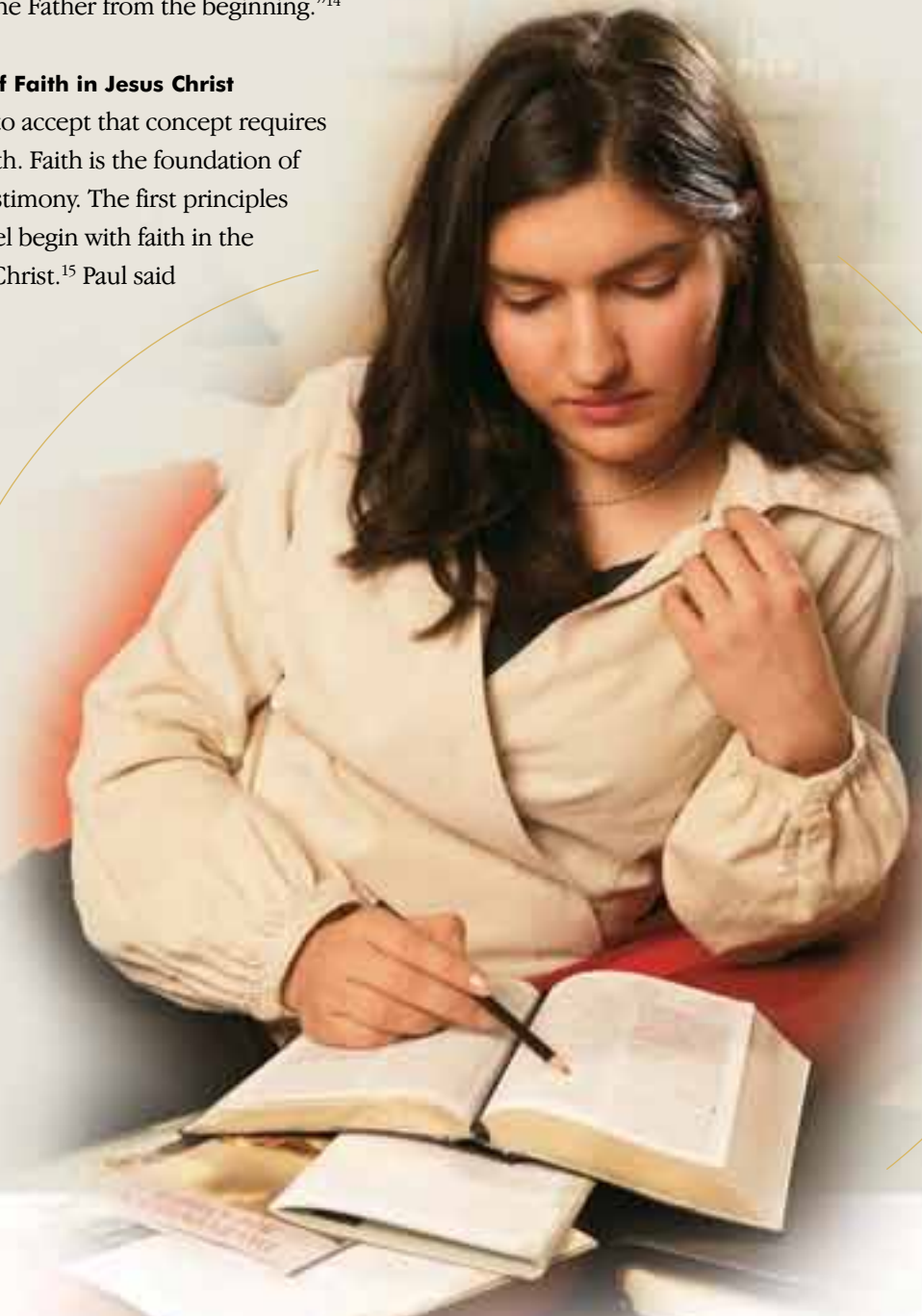
that “faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”¹⁶ He pled “that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend . . . and to know the love of Christ.”¹⁷ Paul entreated us to “come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God.”¹⁸

From the Book of Mormon we learn that

D*ynamic faith in the Lord brings conversion, a mighty change of heart, a change of thinking, from the ways of the world to the ways of Deity.*

Dynamics of Faith in Jesus Christ

For one to accept that concept requires dynamic faith. Faith is the foundation of personal testimony. The first principles of the gospel begin with faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.¹⁵ Paul said



“we are made alive in Christ because of our faith. . . . And we talk of Christ, we rejoice in Christ, we preach of Christ, we prophesy of Christ, and we write according to our prophecies, that our children may know to what source

they may look for a remission of their sins.”¹⁹

Blessings that flow from faith in Him are also revealed in the Book of Mormon. There we read: “Ye must press forward with a steadfastness in

Christ, having a perfect brightness of hope, and a love of God and of all men. Wherefore, if ye shall press forward, feasting upon the word of Christ, and endure to the end, behold, thus saith the Father: Ye

shall have eternal life.”²⁰ That is the “greatest of all the gifts of God.”²¹

Dynamic faith in the Lord leads to complete conversion and a consummate commitment to His holy work. We become children of the covenant; we become His children. Scripture so confirms: “And now, because of the covenant which ye have made ye shall be called the children of Christ, his sons, and his daughters; for behold, this day he hath spiritually begotten you; for ye say that your hearts are changed through faith on his name; therefore, ye are born of him and have become his sons and his daughters.”²²

Dynamic faith in the Lord brings conversion, a mighty change of heart,²³ a change of thinking, from the ways of the world to the ways of Deity. It causes one to repent with “full purpose of heart.”²⁴ Alma added, “Preach unto them repentance, and faith on the Lord Jesus Christ; teach them to humble themselves and to be meek and lowly in heart;

A MIGHTY CHANGE OF HEART

After nursing school, I came to work in the intensive care unit at a children’s hospital. I had a desire to learn and gain experience, to prove myself. I did not imagine, however, that it would be so difficult—both physically and emotionally. I could not understand why the world is so evil that even parents can cause irreparable harm to their own children. Nor did I understand why God allows children to die. After one year of work in the hospital, my soul was exhausted.

Then I learned that members of my family were having discussions with Latter-day Saint missionaries. I worked long shifts and could not be at home when those discussions took place. Soon my sister and mom were baptized. And I felt like I was left alone with questions and unresolved problems. Despite my family trying to arrange a meeting for me with the missionaries, I did not want to see them. But once when Sisters Johnson and Marchuk visited, I joined their conversation. The next time, they taught me a spiritual lesson, and I was able to find answers to questions I had struggled with for a long time. Soon I was baptized and confirmed.

Since I became a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, I have felt sustained by my faith in Jesus Christ. I have experienced again and again the power of prayer and feel that I have come from darkness to light. Six years in the Church have given me a conviction that Jesus Christ is my Savior. And because of Jesus Christ, I now have an opportunity to become closer to my Heavenly Father.

Nadezhda Kusnetsova, Russia

teach them to withstand every temptation of the devil, with their faith on the Lord Jesus Christ.”²⁵

The Book of Mormon exists, in part, to convince the Jew and Gentile that Jesus is the Christ, the eternal God.²⁶ Those who read the Book of Mormon and ask in faith if the book is true gain a testimony of its truth. They also “come to know . . . that Jesus Christ is the Savior of the world [and] that Joseph Smith is his revelator and prophet in these last days.”²⁷

Faith in Jesus Christ: Essential to Salvation and Exaltation

Faith in Jesus Christ not only brings blessings in this life, but it is essential to our eternal salvation and exaltation. Scripture declares, “All men must repent and believe on the name of Jesus Christ, and worship the Father in his name, and endure in faith on his name to the end, or they cannot be saved in the kingdom of God.”²⁸ The Lord also holds parents responsible to teach their children to have “faith in Christ the Son of the living God.”²⁹

I testify that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God. He is our Creator, Savior and Redeemer,³⁰ Advocate with the Father,³¹ Deliverer,³² and Jehovah of the Old Testament.³³ He is the promised Immanuel,³⁴ the anointed Messiah,³⁵ and our great Exemplar.³⁶ One day He will return to rule and reign as King of kings and Lord of lords.³⁷ Eventually, we will each stand before Him at judgment day.³⁸ I pray for each of us that our individual faith in Him will be acceptable. ■

NOTES

1. That very concept was established by the Lord when He said, “When we obtain any blessing from God, it is by obedience to that law upon which it is predicated” (D&C 130:21).
2. D&C 88:38.
3. See Alma 30:44.
4. D&C 88:42–43, 47.
5. See Colossians 1:16; Mosiah 4:2, 9; 5:15; Alma 18:28; 22:10; Moses 3:5.
6. Genesis 1:1.
7. Genesis 1:27.
8. Abraham 4:27.
9. John 3:16.
10. John 1:1–3.
11. In Greek, *Logos* (meaning “word”) is another name for Christ.
12. Moses 1:32–33; emphasis added.
13. See Ephesians 3:9; Mosiah 3:8–11; Helaman 14:12; Mormon 9:8–14.
14. 3 Nephi 9:15. The Lord further declared, “Behold, I am Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, who created the heavens and the earth, a light which cannot be hid in darkness” (D&C 14:9).
15. See Articles of Faith 1:4.
16. Hebrews 11:1.
17. Ephesians 3:17–19.
18. Ephesians 4:11–13; see also Galatians 3:26–29.
19. 2 Nephi 25:25–26.
20. 2 Nephi 31:20; see also Enos 1:8; Mosiah 3:12.
21. D&C 14:7.
22. Mosiah 5:7.
23. See Alma 5:12–14.
24. 2 Nephi 31:13; see also Jacob 6:5; Mosiah 7:33; 3 Nephi 10:6; 12:24; 18:32.
25. Alma 37:33; see also Mormon 9:37; Moroni 7:25–26, 33–34, 38–39.

THE FAITH OF A CHILD

I decided to go on foot to stake conference, walking about 30 or 40 minutes with my son, then eight years old. Twenty minutes had passed when I realized that I no longer knew which direction we needed to go. My son, Elson, always a great talker, had been telling me one story or another about things that had happened in school or at home. I asked him to be quiet for a moment, explaining that I needed to think because I feared we were lost.

It was then that my son showed me his faith. He suggested that we offer a prayer. I, with all the intelligence and understanding of an adult (and becoming a little impatient because the hands of the clock were nearing the time for the meeting to begin), answered that if he wanted to offer a prayer, to do so—however, I preferred to think. I said to myself, “There are things we do not need to depend on the Lord for; finding the way to the chapel is one of them.”

As though he were reading my thoughts, Elson gave me a lesson in humility, saying, “Why do you insist on doing things the hard way?” After that he became silent, and I know that in his mind and heart he prayed. Minutes later we arrived at the chapel, and I knew that he had received an answer to his prayer.

As Latter-day Saints, we are blessed to be members of the Church of Jesus Christ. My testimony of the truthfulness of the restored gospel increased when I realized that my son, still a child, knew how to put the principles of faith and prayer into practice, becoming for me an example of how to live the teachings of Jesus Christ.

Elson Carlos Ferreira, Brazil

26. See Book of Mormon title page.
27. Book of Mormon introduction.
28. D&C 20:29.
29. D&C 68:25; see also Moses 6:57–62.
30. See Isaiah 49:26; 60:16; 1 Nephi 21:26; 2 Nephi 6:18.
31. See D&C 29:5; 110:4.
32. See 2 Samuel 22:2; D&C 138:23.
33. See D&C 110:3.
34. See Isaiah 7:14.
35. See 2 Nephi 25:14–19.
36. See John 13:15; 3 Nephi 27:21.
37. See Revelation 17:14; 19:16.
38. See Revelation 20:12; 1 Nephi 15:33; 2 Nephi 9:22, 44; 28:23; Alma 5:15; 3 Nephi 27:14; Mormon 3:20; 9:8–14.

Emilio's Faith

A deacon showed me—his bishop—what it means “to have faith to be healed.”

BY RAMON RAMIREZ

A few months ago, Emilio, one of the deacons in our ward, suddenly became very ill. The doctors were unable to diagnose what he had. Both he and his mother were scared because he was getting weaker and going downhill fast. His mother took him to the hospital several times but did not succeed in getting any answers.

Emilio's mother brought him to the meetinghouse for a priesthood blessing. One of the members of the elders quorum and I, his bishop, had the privilege of blessing him, and he slept well for the first time in nights.

However, a few days later I learned that Emilio had experienced a relapse and was back in the hospital. Another brother and I quickly went to the hospital, where we were able to go into his room and visit with him. Thinking that Emilio would probably be discouraged by the downturn in his condition, I was especially uplifted by what happened next.

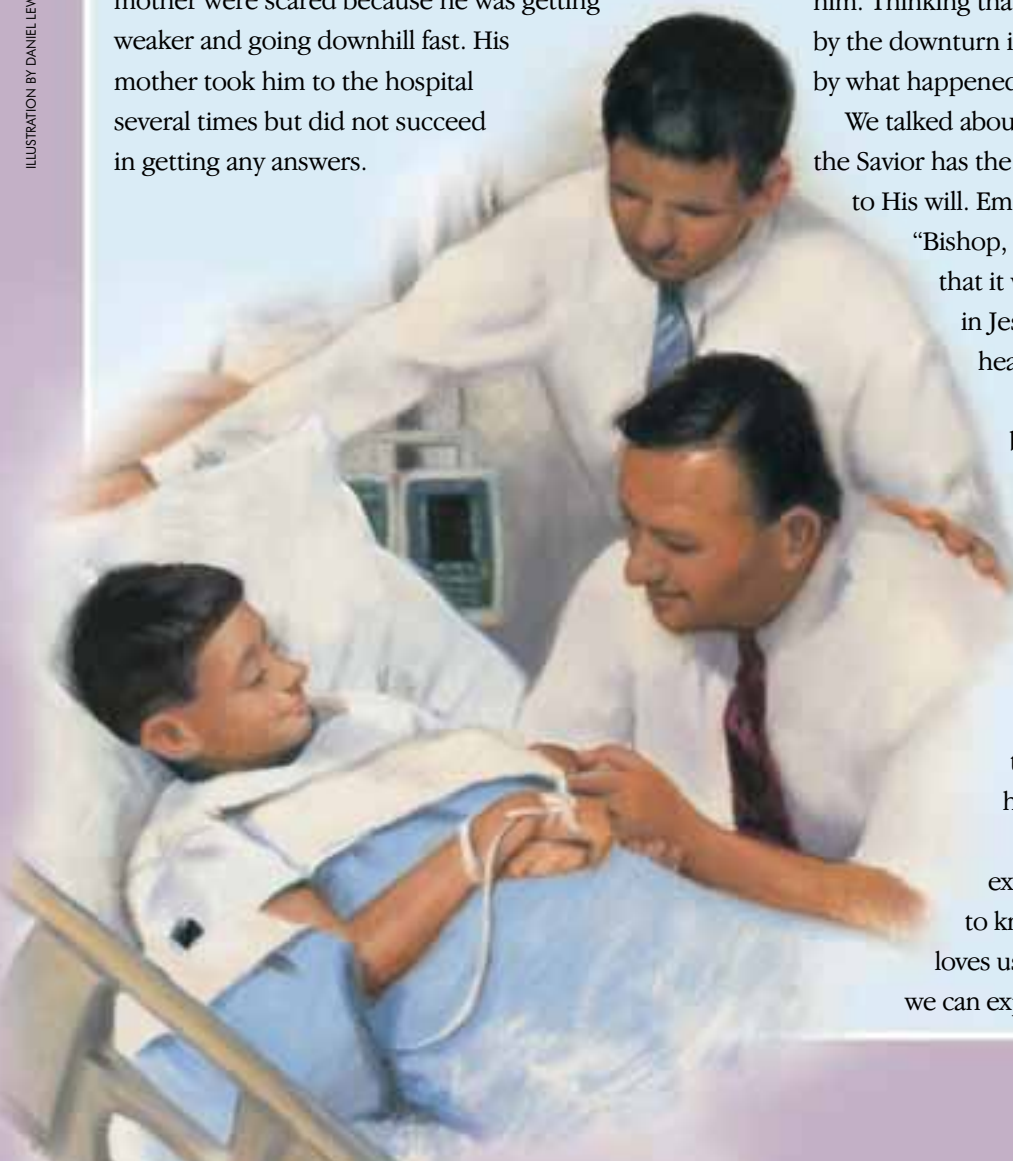
We talked about Jesus Christ, and I explained that the Savior has the power to surmount anything, according to His will. Emilio's reply deeply touched our hearts:

“Bishop, this is just another trial. I have faith that it will be over soon because I have faith in Jesus Christ.” We placed our hands on his head and again gave him a blessing.

After that night Emilio made an unbelievable and complete recovery. He was able to return to his daily activities and to church without difficulty.

Emilio had exercised the faith necessary for the Savior to perform the same kind of miracle He performed when He was here on earth. To me, Emilio is an example of those of whom the Lord said, “To some it is given to have faith to be healed” (D&C 46:19).

It is wonderful to have the privilege of exercising the priesthood in our lives and to know that we have a Heavenly Father, who loves us, and that through our faith in His Son, we can experience miracles in these latter days. ■



The Atonement of Jesus Christ



The Atonement of the Only Begotten Son of God is the crucial foundation upon which all Christian doctrine rests and the greatest expression of divine love this world has ever been given.

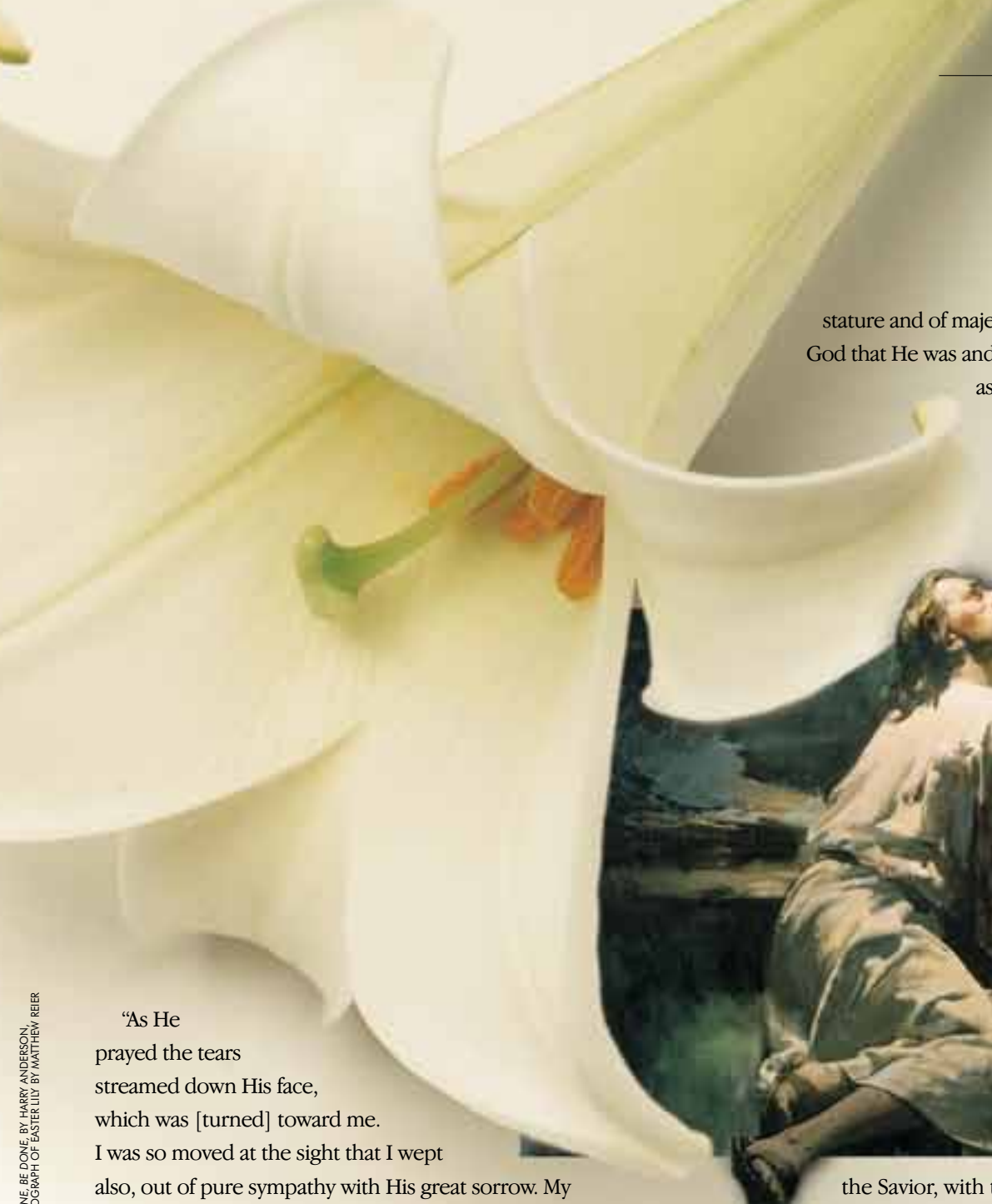
BY ELDER JEFFREY R. HOLLAND
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

In the Garden of Gethsemane

As a young missionary, Elder Orson F. Whitney (1855–1931), who later served in the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, had a dream so powerful that it changed his life forever. He later wrote:

“One night I dreamed . . . that I was in the Garden of Gethsemane, a witness of the Savior’s agony. . . . I stood behind a tree in the foreground. . . . Jesus, with Peter, James, and John, came through a little wicket gate at my right. Leaving the three Apostles there, after telling them to kneel and pray, He passed over to the other side, where He also knelt and prayed . . . : ‘Oh my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless not as I will but as Thou wilt.’





stature and of majestic mien . . . the very God that He was and is, yet as meek and lowly as a little child.


“All at once the circumstance seemed to change. . . . Instead of before, it was after the Crucifixion, and

“As He prayed the tears streamed down His face, which was [turned] toward me.

I was so moved at the sight that I wept also, out of pure sympathy with His great sorrow. My whole heart went out to Him. I loved Him with all my soul and longed to be with Him as I longed for nothing else.

“Presently He arose and walked to where those Apostles were kneeling—fast asleep! He shook them gently, awoke them, and in a tone of tender reproach, untinged by the least show of anger or scolding, asked them if they could not watch with Him one hour. . . .

“Returning to His place, He prayed again and then went back and found them again sleeping. Again He awoke them, admonished them, and returned and prayed as before. Three times this happened, until I was perfectly familiar with His appearance—face, form, and movements. He was of noble



the Savior, with those three Apostles, now stood together in a group at my left.

They were about to depart and ascend into heaven. I could endure it no longer. I ran from behind the tree, fell at His feet, clasped Him around the knees, and begged Him to take me with Him.

“I shall never forget the kind and gentle manner in which He stooped and raised me up and embraced me. It was so vivid, so real that I felt the very warmth of His bosom against which I rested. Then He said: ‘No, my son; these have finished their work, and they may go with me; but you must stay and finish yours.’ Still I clung to Him. Gazing up into His face—for He was taller than I—I besought Him most



Why an Atonement?

This tender, personal glimpse of the Savior's loving sacrifice is a fitting introduction to the significance of the Atonement of Jesus Christ. Indeed the Atonement of the Only Begotten Son of God in the flesh is the crucial foundation upon

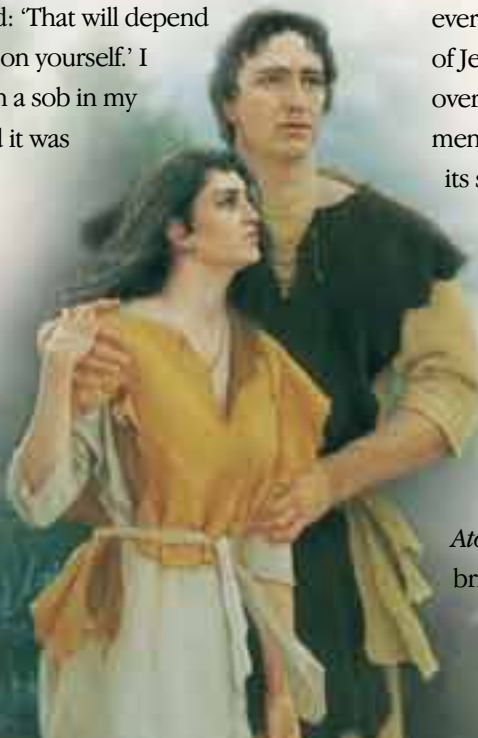
which all Christian doctrine rests and the greatest expression of divine love this world has ever been given. Its importance in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints cannot be overstated. Every other principle, commandment, and virtue of the restored gospel draws its significance from this pivotal event.²

The Atonement was the foreordained but voluntary act of the Only Begotten Son of God in which He offered His life and spiritual anguish as a redeeming ransom for the effect of the Fall of Adam upon all mankind and for the personal sins of all who repent.

The literal meaning of the English word *Atonement* is self-evident: at-one-ment, the bringing together of things that have been

The Atonement was indispensable because the Fall of Adam brought two kinds of death into the world.

earnestly: 'Well, promise me that I will come to You at the last.' He smiled sweetly and tenderly and replied: 'That will depend entirely upon yourself.' I awoke with a sob in my throat, and it was morning."¹



separated or estranged. The Atonement of Jesus Christ was indispensable because of the separating transgression, or Fall, of Adam, which brought two kinds of death into the world when Adam and Eve partook of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil.³ Physical death brought the separation of the spirit from the body, and spiritual death brought the estrangement of both the spirit and the body from God. As a result of the Fall, all persons born into mortality would suffer these two kinds of death. But we must remember the Fall was an essential part of Heavenly Father's divine plan. Without it no mortal children would have been born to Adam and Eve, and there would have been no human family to experience opposition and growth, moral agency, and the joy of resurrection, redemption, and eternal life.⁴

The need for this Fall and for an atonement to compensate for it was explained in a premortal Council in Heaven at which the spirits of the entire human family attended and over which God the Father presided. It was in this premortal setting that Christ volunteered to honor the moral agency of all humankind even as He atoned for their sins. In the process, He would return to the Father all glory for such redemptive love.⁵

This infinite Atonement of Christ was possible because (1) He was the only sinless man ever to live on this earth and therefore was not subject to the spiritual death resulting from sin, (2) He was the Only Begotten of the Father

LIVING BY HIS SIDE

The Lord held out His hand to me almost five years ago, and the gospel changed my life. Thanks to His Atonement, I was redeemed from the choices of the past and was able to feel in my heart the miracle of forgiveness.

Jesus Christ accompanies and strengthens us each day if we are worthy. Not only are our sins erased and forgotten, but His light radiates in our personal and professional lives.

He is our Savior, the Son of God. His love is infinite. If we live as He would have us live, we will share His love and have the hope of returning to live with Him and our Heavenly Father forever.

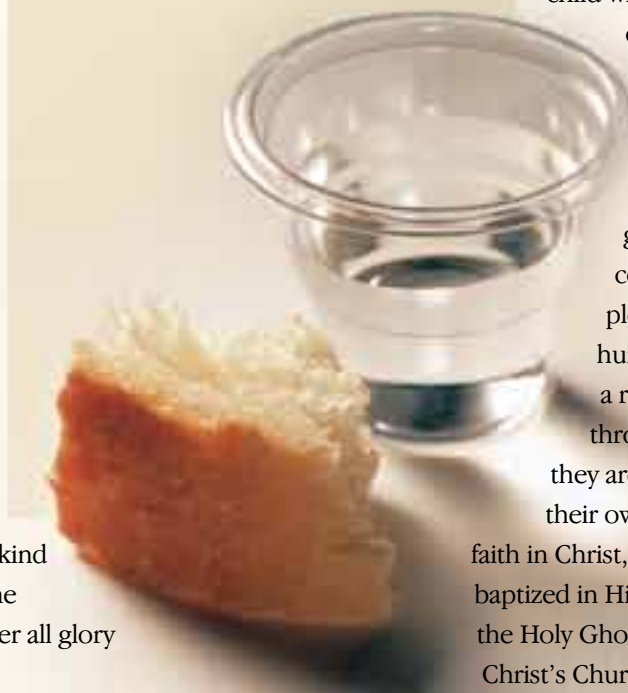
Marie Monjusan, France

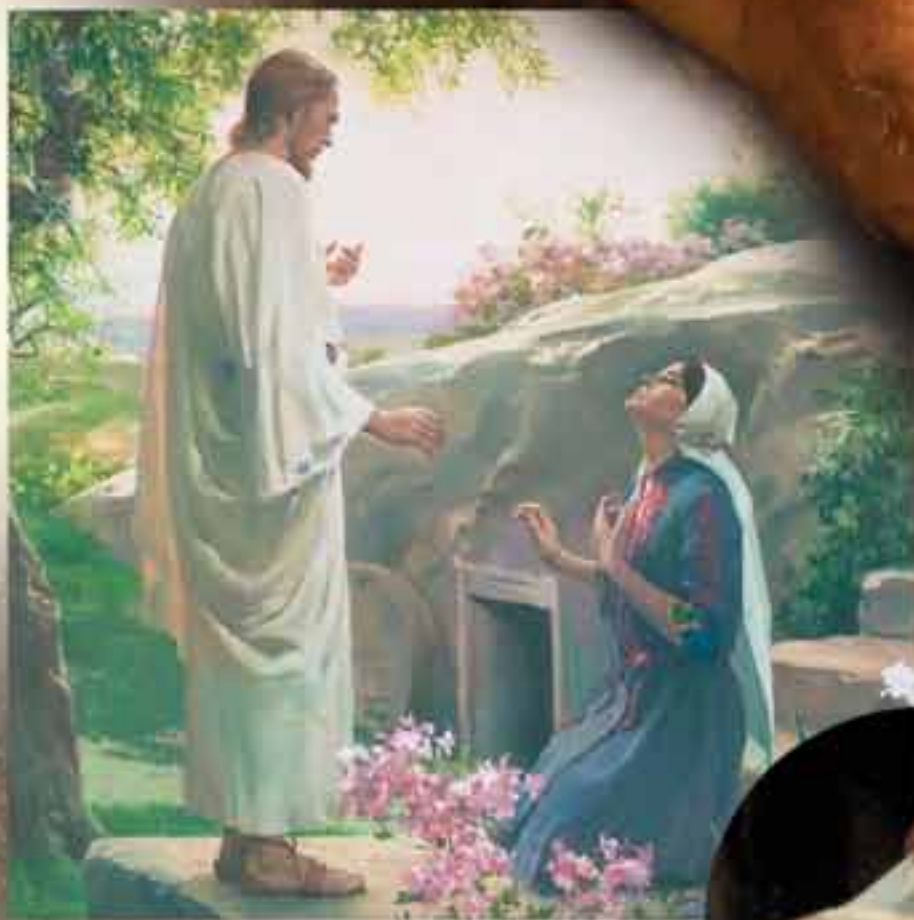
and therefore possessed the attributes of godhood that gave Him power over physical death,⁶ and (3) He was apparently the only one sufficiently humble and willing in the premortal council to be fore-ordained to that service.⁷

The Gifts of Christ's Atonement

Some gifts coming from the Atonement are universal, infinite, and unconditional. These include His ransom for Adam's original transgression so that no member of the human family is held responsible for that sin.⁸ Another universal gift is the Resurrection from the dead of every man, woman, and child who lives, has ever lived, or ever will live on earth.

Other aspects of Christ's atoning gift are conditional. They depend on one's diligence in keeping God's commandments. For example, while all members of the human family are freely given a reprieve from Adam's sin through no effort of their own, they are not given a reprieve from their own sins unless they pledge faith in Christ, repent of those sins, are baptized in His name, receive the gift of the Holy Ghost and confirmation into Christ's Church, and press forward in faithful endurance the remainder of life's journey. Of this personal challenge, Christ said, "For behold, I, God, have suffered these things for all, that they might not suffer if they would repent;





The Resurrection of the body is a free and universal gift, a result of the Savior's victory over death. It is one of the unconditional blessings available through the grace of Christ.

"But if they would not repent they must suffer even as I."⁹

Furthermore, although the Resurrection of the body is a free and universal gift from Christ, a result of His victory over death, the nature of the resurrected body (or "degree of glory" given it), as well as the time of one's Resurrection, is affected directly by one's faithfulness in this life. The Apostle Paul made clear, for example, that those fully committed to Christ will "rise first"¹⁰ in the Resurrection. Modern revelation clarifies the different orders of resurrected bodies,¹¹ promising the highest degree of glory only to those who adhere to the principles and ordinances of the gospel of Jesus Christ.¹²

Of course neither the unconditional nor the

conditional blessings of the Atonement are available except through the grace of Christ.


Obviously the unconditional blessings of the Atonement are unearned, but the conditional ones are not fully merited either. By living faithfully and keeping the commandments of God, one can receive additional

privileges; but they are still given

freely, not technically earned. The Book of Mormon declares emphatically that "there is no flesh that can dwell in the presence of God, save it be through the merits, and mercy, and grace of the Holy Messiah."¹³

By this same grace, God provides for the salvation of little children, the mentally impaired, those who lived without hearing the gospel of Jesus Christ, and so forth: these are redeemed by the universal power of the Atonement of Christ and will have the





opportunity to receive the fulness of the gospel after death, in the spirit world, where spirits reside while awaiting the Resurrection.¹⁴

Suffering and Triumph

To begin to meet the demands of the Atonement, the sinless Christ went into the Garden of Gethsemane, as Elder Whitney saw in his dream, there to bear the agony of soul only He could bear. He “began to be sore amazed and to be very heavy,” saying to Peter, James, and John, “My soul is exceeding sorrowful, unto death.”¹⁵ Why? Because He suffered “the pains of all men, yea, the pains of every living creature, both men, women, and children, who belong to the family of Adam.”¹⁶ He experienced “temptations, and pain of body, hunger, thirst, and fatigue, even more than man can suffer, except it be unto death; for behold, blood cometh from every pore, so great [was] his anguish.”¹⁷

ANTICIPATING THE RESURRECTION

When my dear wife returned home to our Heavenly Father, it was necessary for our family to find a suitable grave site. In doing so, I faced opposition when I wanted to have the term *resting place* included on the gravestone. The term did not meet the cemetery management’s policy.

Thus ensued a tenacious struggle. At one point the minister of the church to which the cemetery grounds belonged asked about the term. I was able to bear my testimony that I believe in the literal resurrection of the body, quoting the Savior: “All that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life” (John 5:28–29). I testified that this grave is a sacred resting place for us until the Resurrection.

Then the minister made an inspired suggestion. “Have the following words inscribed on the gravestone: ‘The Bohne and Lehmann families are resting here in anticipation of the Resurrection.’” So it was done. And with that, my testimony was chiseled in stone.

Rudolf Lehmann, Germany

Through this suffering, Jesus redeemed the souls of all men, women, and children “that his bowels may be filled with mercy, according to the flesh, that he may know according to the flesh how to succor his people according to their infirmities.”¹⁸ In doing so, Christ “descended below all things”—including every kind of sickness, infirmity, and dark despair experienced by every mortal being—in order that He might “comprehend all things, that he might be in all and through all things, the light of truth.”¹⁹

The utter loneliness and excruciating pain of the Atonement begun in Gethsemane reached its zenith when, after unspeakable abuse at the hands of Roman soldiers and others, Christ cried from the cross, “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?”²⁰ In the depths of

that anguish, even nature itself convulsed.

“There was a darkness over all the earth. . . .

And the sun was darkened.”²¹ “And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom;

and the earth did

quake, and the

rocks rent,”²²

causing many to exclaim, “The God of nature

suffers.”²³ Finally, even the seemingly unbearable had been borne, and Jesus said, “It is finished.”²⁴ “Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.”²⁵ Someday, somewhere, every human tongue will be called upon to confess as did a Roman centurion who witnessed all of this, “Truly this was the Son of God.”²⁶

To the thoughtful woman and man, it is “a matter of surpassing wonder”²⁷ that the voluntary and merciful sacrifice of a single being could satisfy the infinite and eternal demands of justice, atone for every human transgression and misdeed, and thereby sweep all humankind into the encompassing arms of His merciful embrace. But so it is.

To quote President John Taylor (1808–87): “In a manner to us incomprehensible and inexplicable, He bore the weight of the sins of the whole world; not only of Adam, but of his posterity; and in doing that, opened the kingdom of heaven, not only to all believers and all who obeyed the law of God, but to more than one-half of the human family who die before they come to years of maturity, as well as to [those] who . . . [die] without [the] law.”²⁸

As Elder Whitney felt regarding this majestic gift and the giver of it, may we so feel: “I was so moved at the [gift] that I wept . . . out of pure sympathy. My whole heart went out to Him. I loved Him with all my soul and longed to be with Him as I longed for nothing else.” Having already offered the Atonement in our behalf, Christ has done His part to make that longing a reality. The rest will depend entirely upon ourselves. ■

THE SAVIOR'S MERCIFUL EMBRACE

I have struggled throughout my life with feelings of failure, of not being good enough. But I have discovered that the gospel of Jesus Christ is an antidote to these feelings.

Because of the Atonement, the Savior understands my fears, and He comforts me through the Holy Ghost. He knows my weaknesses, and He helps me to overcome them. He has never left me alone, but He has strengthened me and expanded my heart.

I may never measure up by the world's standards, but I feel valued, worthwhile, and loved when I do my best to live the teachings of Jesus Christ.

Susan Lunt, Utah, USA



NOTES

1. “The Divinity of Jesus Christ,” *Improvement Era*, Jan. 1926, 224–25; see also *Liabona*, Dec. 2003, 16; *Ensign*, Dec. 2003, 10; punctuation, capitalization, and spelling standardized.
2. See *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 49.
3. See Genesis 2:9; 3.
4. See 2 Nephi 2:22–27; Moses 5:11.
5. See Revelation 13:8; Moses 4:1–2; Abraham 3:22–27.
6. See John 5:26–29; 2 Nephi 9:5–12; Alma 34:9–14.
7. See James E. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ*, 3rd ed. (1916), 21–22.
8. See Articles of Faith 1:2.
9. D&C 19:16–17.
10. 1 Thessalonians 4:16.
11. See D&C 76:50–113; compare 1 Corinthians 15:40–42.
12. See D&C 76:50–70; 88:4, 27–29; 132:21–24.
13. 2 Nephi 2:8.
14. See Alma 40:11; D&C 138; compare Luke 23:43; John 5:25.
15. Mark 14:33–34.
16. 2 Nephi 9:21.
17. Mosiah 3:7.
18. Alma 7:12.
19. D&C 88:6.
20. Matthew 27:46.
21. Luke 23:44–45.
22. Matthew 27:51.
23. 1 Nephi 19:12.
24. John 19:30.
25. Luke 23:46.
26. Matthew 27:54.
27. James E. Talmage, *The Articles of Faith*, 12th ed. (1924), 77.
28. *The Mediation and Atonement* (1882), 148–49; capitalization standardized.



The Atonement at Work

I knew the Lord had a plan for my son, but when he chose a path I wished he hadn't, I wasn't sure how he was going to come back.

NAME WITHHELD

I joined The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in 1992 in the Netherlands. However, my husband didn't join and wouldn't allow our children, Alex and Petra, to be baptized (names have been changed). Even still, the three of us attended church and had regular family home evenings.

All went well for several years until Alex, then 13,

announced that he was no longer willing to go to church or attend family home evening. As he got older, things continually got worse. It was difficult for me to stay close to Alex because he not only began drinking and smoking, but he also lied about his behavior. It broke my heart, and I shed many tears and offered many prayers as I pleaded with Heavenly Father to help my son.

Then one night while sitting quietly in the temple, I saw a picture in my mind. It was of a young man passing the sacrament. It seemed that the Lord was reminding me of the reality and power of His Atonement, encouraging me to love my son and to stay by his side.

However, as time progressed, life actually got rougher. After Alex's father and I divorced, Alex got really depressed. I knew he needed help, but he didn't want my help and wouldn't listen if I tried to talk to him.

One night our branch president asked if he could come talk to Alex. Alex was irritated but did agree to have a conversation. After the meeting, Alex was angry with the branch

president for encouraging him to serve a mission, saying, “If the branch president really was a man of God, he would know better. He would know that I’m not worthy to go—so why bother me?” That night I knew the Lord had a plan.

The plan began to take shape in an unexpected way when I received a phone call from the local police station. Alex had been arrested. My new husband and I put on our coats and in the middle of the night picked Alex up from the police station. We didn’t make a scene; actually Alex’s stepfather and I said very little.

When we got home, Alex told us what had happened when he and his friend had stolen a scooter. He was so sorry for what he had done. I saw for the first time a broken young man.

The arrest was a turning point for Alex as he began to realize the consequences of his actions and where he was headed. From that day on, so many blessings started to come our way.

The next day Alex told us that he had asked the officer to call us because he knew that we loved him. He also realized how much he had hurt us, and he appreciated that we had stayed calm.

Alex had several member friends who reached out to help him. One invited him to Church activities. Another gave him a Book of Mormon and challenged him to read it. And despite his suffering from dyslexia, I would find Alex reading it now and again.

The next blessing—if I could actually count them—was when Alex asked if we would buy him a suit since he had decided he wanted to go to church. I thought he meant just for Christmas. But to my great surprise, he continued attending even after the holidays.

The next blessing seemed almost too much for me to comprehend. Alex announced that he was going to be baptized. He didn’t need any help from me and arranged everything himself with assistance from his friends and the missionaries who were teaching him. I almost couldn’t believe my eyes when the day came, and I was able to see my son in white, making sacred covenants.

Later as he related the story of his conversion, I realized

that Alex’s pain and sorrow had been difficult, but they also helped him become humble enough to bend his knees and ask for help. Alex explained: “One night when my burdens were too heavy to carry, I remembered the words of a good friend who had reminded me that I could always pray for help. That night I decided to give it a try. There was not another door open to me, and since my mom had taught me how to pray, I kneeled down and closed my eyes. As I started to plead for help, the most wonderful feeling came over me. I’ll never forget that feeling; I felt the pure love of Christ. I felt that my problems were taken away from me. My desperate feelings haven’t come back since, and I have been blessed with a testimony of Jesus Christ. My heart was changed, and I desired to follow Jesus Christ.”

After his baptism, confirmation, and ordination to the priesthood, Alex was asked to pass the sacrament—the sacred emblems of the Savior’s sacrifice. Then what I had seen in the temple so many years ago became a living reality right in front of me. I silently thanked Heavenly



Father for what I was experiencing. It was a holy moment for me.

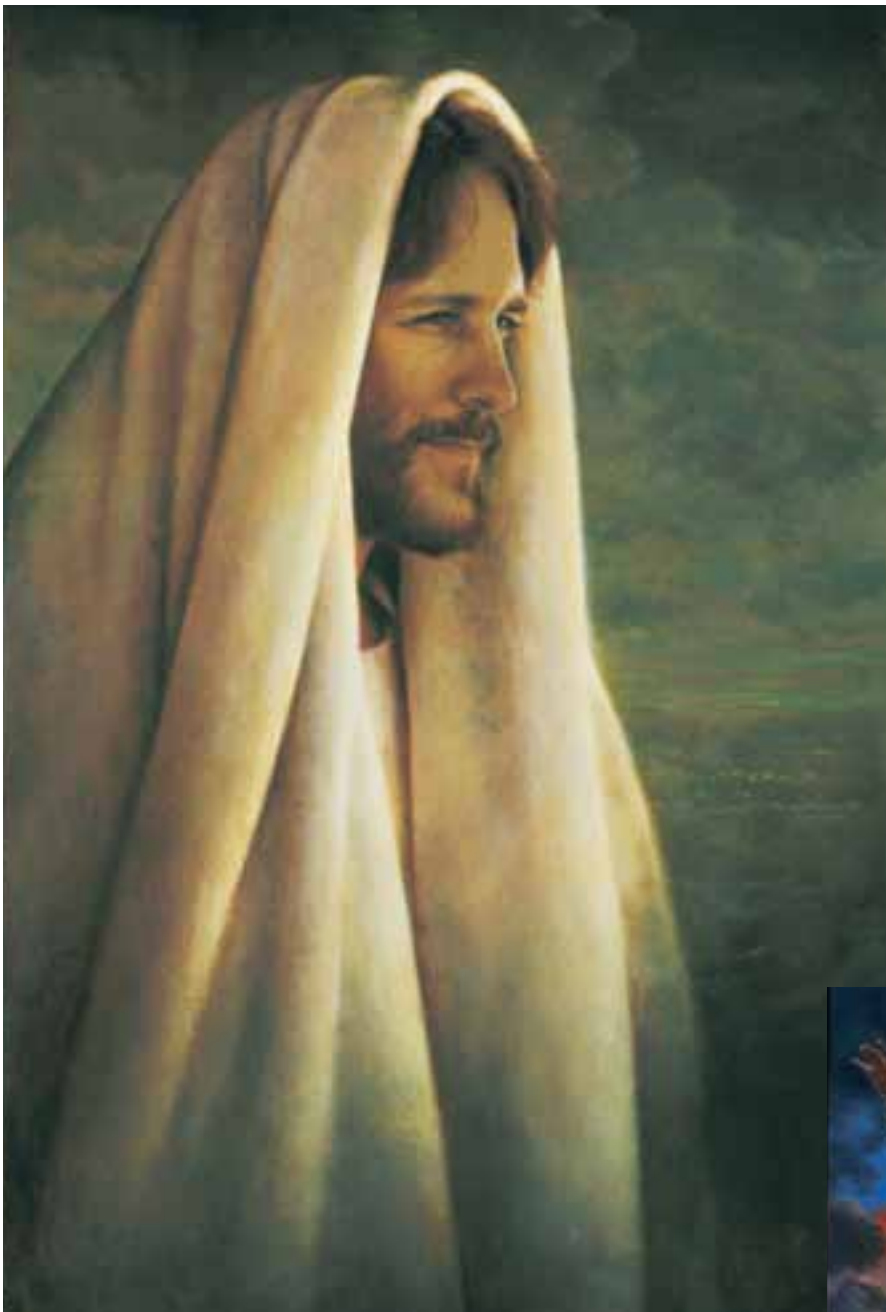
The story could end there, but fortunately it hasn't. I have since watched as the Atonement has continued to work in the life of my son. Remember our inspired branch president? My son's testimony has continued to grow, and the invitation of our branch president became a reality. Alex recently finished serving as a full-time missionary. He spent two years reaching out and helping others—as the Lord reached out to him.

I am grateful to be Alex's mother, but I am even more grateful for the Atonement of Jesus Christ that works in the lives of all of us. ■

After his ordination to the priesthood, Alex was asked to pass the sacrament. Then what I had seen in the temple so many years ago became a living reality.

The Living

The Testimony of the Apostles of The Church of Jesus



Christ

Christ of Latter-day Saints



**Clockwise from left: Gentle Healer, by Greg Olsen;
All the City Was Gathered Together, by James Tissot;
John Baptizing Jesus, by Harry Anderson; Christ Creating
the Earth, by Robert T. Barrett.**

As we commemorate the birth of Jesus Christ two millennia ago, we offer our testimony of the reality of His matchless life and the infinite virtue of His great atoning sacrifice. None other has had so profound an influence upon all who have lived and will yet live upon the earth.

He was the Great Jehovah of the Old Testament, the Messiah of the New. Under the direction of His Father, He was the creator of the earth. “All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made” (John 1:3). Though sinless, He was baptized to fulfill all righteousness. He “went about doing good” (Acts 10:38), yet was despised for it. His gospel was a message of peace and goodwill. He entreated all to follow His example. He walked the roads of Palestine, healing the sick, causing the blind to see, and raising the dead. He taught the truths of eternity, the reality of our premortal existence, the purpose of our life on earth, and the potential for the sons and daughters of God in the life to come.

He instituted the sacrament as a reminder of His great atoning sacrifice. He was arrested and condemned on spurious charges, convicted to satisfy a mob, and sentenced to die on Calvary’s cross. He gave His life to atone for the sins of all mankind. His was a great vicarious gift in behalf of all who would ever live upon the earth.

We solemnly testify that His life,

which is central to all human history, neither began in Bethlehem nor concluded on Calvary. He was the Firstborn of the Father, the Only Begotten Son in the flesh, the Redeemer of the world.

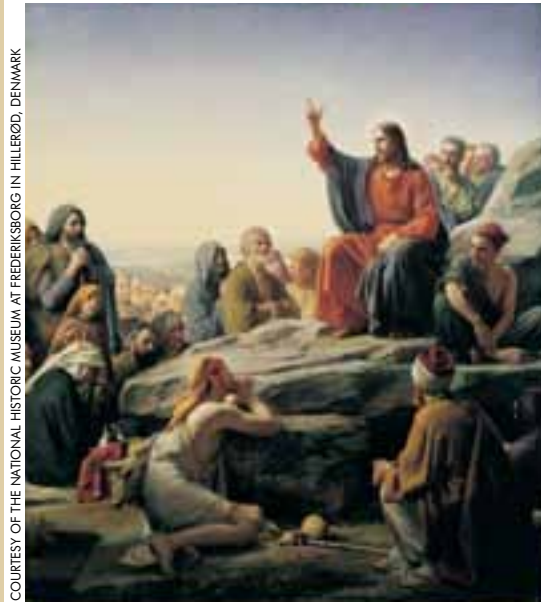
He rose from the grave to “become the firstfruits of them that slept” (1 Corinthians 15:20). As Risen Lord, He visited among those He had loved in life. He also ministered among His “other sheep” (John 10:16) in ancient America. In the modern world, He and His Father appeared to the boy Joseph Smith, ushering in the long-promised “dispensation of the fulness of times” (Ephesians 1:10).

Of the Living Christ, the Prophet Joseph wrote: “His eyes were as a flame of fire; the hair of his head was white like the pure snow; his countenance shone above the brightness of the sun; and his voice was as the sound of the rushing of great waters, even the voice of Jehovah, saying:

“I am the first and the last; I am he who liveth, I am he who was slain; I am your advocate with the Father” (D&C 110:3–4).

Of Him the Prophet also declared: “And now, after the many testimonies which have been given of him, this is the testimony, last of all, which we give of him: That he lives!

“For we saw him, even on the right hand of God; and we heard the voice bearing record that he



Left: The Sermon on the Mount, by Carl Heinrich Bloch; below left: Christ in Gethsemane, by Heinrich Hofmann; below: The Crucifixion of Christ, artist unknown; right: Why Weepst Thou? by Simon Dewey.







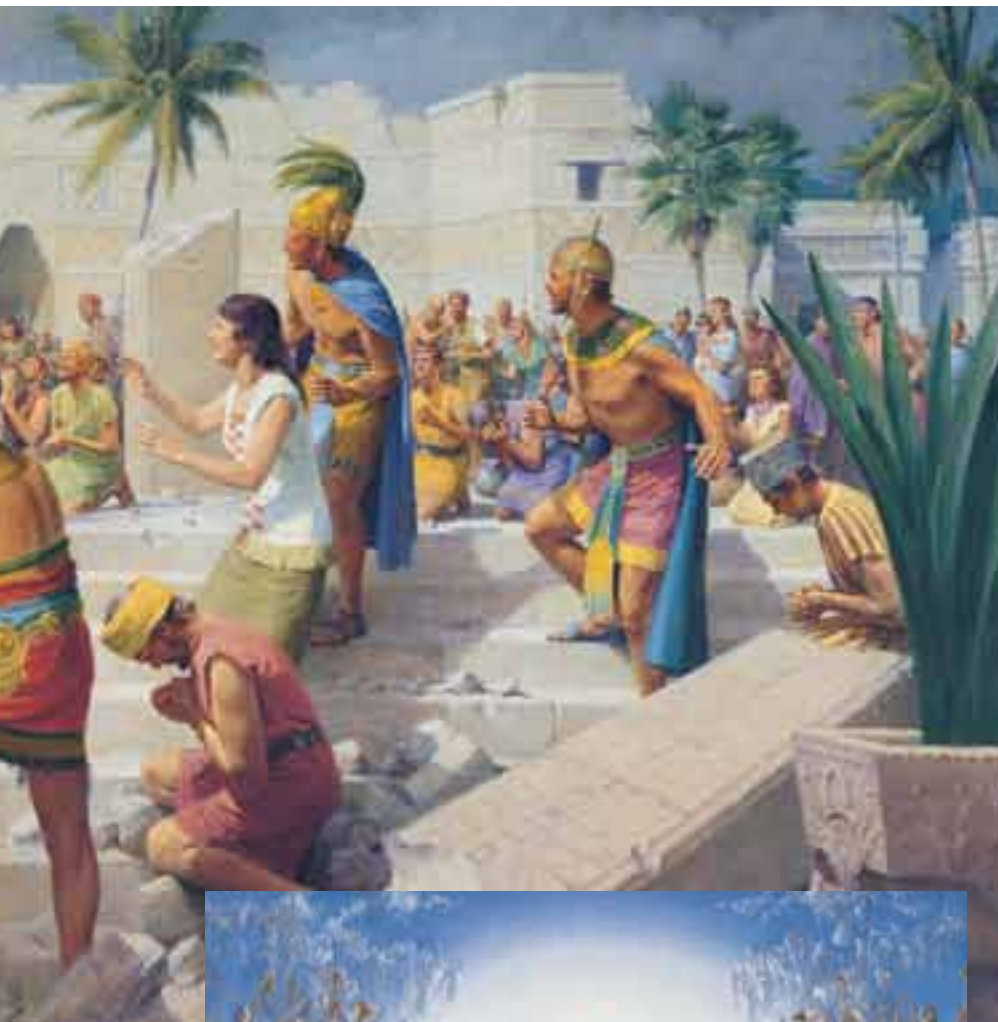
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Below: The Restoration of the Melchizedek Priesthood, by Ken Riley; right: The Second Coming, by Harry Anderson.



Top: Jesus Christ Visits the Americas, by John Scott; left: The First Vision, by Gary Kapp; above: Jesus Christ Appearing to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery in the Kirtland Temple, by Gary Smith.



is the Only Begotten of the Father—

“That by him, and through him, and of him, the worlds are and were created, and the inhabitants thereof are begotten sons and daughters unto God” (D&C 76:22–24).

We declare in words of solemnity that His priesthood and His Church have been restored upon the earth—“built upon the foundation of . . . apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone” (Ephesians 2:20).

We testify that He will someday return to earth. “And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together” (Isaiah 40:5). He will rule as King of Kings and reign as Lord of Lords, and every knee shall bend and every tongue shall speak in worship before Him. Each of us will stand to be judged of Him according to our works and the desires of our hearts.

We bear testimony, as His duly ordained Apostles—that Jesus is the Living Christ, the immortal Son of God. He is the great King Immanuel, who stands today on the right hand of His Father. He is the light, the life, and the hope of the world. His way is the path that leads to happiness in this life and eternal life in the world to come. God be thanked for the matchless gift of His divine Son. ■

“The Living Christ: The Testimony of the Apostles,” dated January 1, 2000, was signed by the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. It was published in the April 2000 Liahona and Ensign.

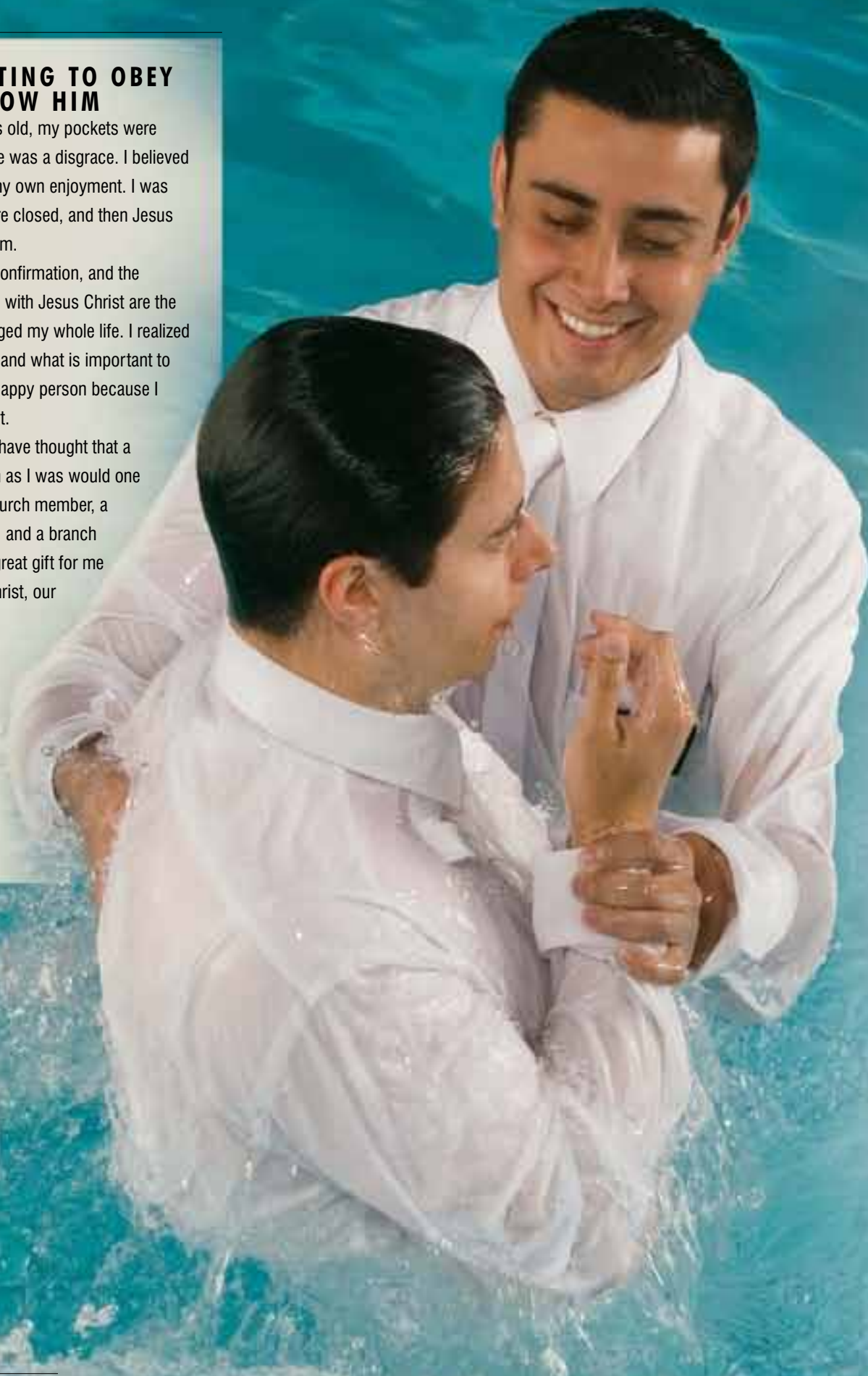
COVENANTING TO OBEY AND FOLLOW HIM

I was 60 years old, my pockets were empty, and my life was a disgrace. I believed that life was for my own enjoyment. I was lost, my eyes were closed, and then Jesus Christ opened them.

My baptism, confirmation, and the covenants I made with Jesus Christ are the miracle that changed my whole life. I realized what I could gain and what is important to me. Now I am a happy person because I know Jesus Christ.

I would never have thought that a worldly man such as I was would one day become a Church member, a priesthood holder, and a branch president. It is a great gift for me to serve Jesus Christ, our Savior.

**Virab Minasyan,
Armenia**



Come unto Christ

BY PRESIDENT HENRY B. EYRING
Second Counselor in the First Presidency

The words “come unto Christ” are an invitation. It is the most important invitation you could ever offer to another person. It is the most important invitation anyone could accept. From the beginning of the Restoration of the gospel in this dispensation, it has been the charge given by Jesus Christ to His representatives. Their charge has been “to warn, expound, exhort, and teach, and invite all to come unto Christ.”¹

Every member of the Church, upon accepting the baptismal covenant, becomes a disciple who has promised to stand as a witness of Jesus Christ at all times in any place he or she may be in.² The purpose of our witness is to invite people to come unto Him.

All of us should be intensely interested in learning how to issue that invitation effectively. We know from experience that some will not respond. Only a few responded when the Savior Himself offered this invitation during His mortal ministry. But great was His joy in those who recognized His voice. And great has been our joy when those we have invited have come unto Him.

Know That He Is the Way

It is worthwhile to ponder over those instances in our own lives when people have responded. Personally, I have seen a pattern when people have accepted that invitation. In each case the Holy Ghost has manifested at least three truths to them. The experiences have not always come in the sequence in which I will list them, but they all come to the hearts of those who truly come unto Christ.

First, they come to feel that the only way they can have the happiness they want most in this life and in the world to come is through Jesus Christ. They come to believe these words from the Book of Mormon: “Behold I say unto you, that as these things are true, and as the Lord God liveth, there is none other name given under heaven save it be this Jesus Christ, of which I have spoken, whereby man can be saved.”³

That assurance is not easy to feel in a world in which many voices say that there is no God, that there is no sin, and that happiness is found in pleasure. But our voices can be more powerful if we can get the gift of bearing a sure witness that Jesus is the Christ and the Savior of the world. That witness will come most powerfully out of



By helping others come unto Him, you will find that you have come unto Him yourself.

your own experiences with the Atonement of Jesus Christ working in your life. If you reflect often on how His Atonement has changed you and if you give thanks often, you will find that your witness of Him gains power to touch the hearts of others. When those you invite out of your own testimony feel that witness, they will come to accept Him as their Lord and Savior. And that acceptance, when it comes, will warm their hearts and yours.

Covenant and Obey

Second, those I know who have truly come unto Him make covenants to obey and to follow Him. It may begin by keeping simple commitments, such as reading the Book of Mormon or going to a sacrament meeting. It must come out of their faith that Jesus is the Christ and the Savior. When they keep the commitment out of that faith, they feel something. They may not be able to identify the feeling in words, but they feel better. Obedience, even in small things, brings that blessing from God. And in time they begin to feel a repentant heart and with it a desire to make the covenant of baptism, to take the Savior's name upon them, and to be cleansed from sin.

People come to make that crucial choice for many reasons. At first one man we taught could not see the need to be baptized. After all, he had tried to be good all his life. He had committed no serious sin. He had been baptized as a child in another church. But then two things came to his mind. One was that the Savior was baptized out of obedience, having never sinned. The other is that he wanted to make the commitment to the Savior through the authority of the true priesthood, just as the Savior went to John to be baptized.

Another young man we taught chose to be baptized out

STRIVING TO BECOME LIKE HIM

I love the Lord with all my heart. He is my friend. I know that because of Him, I can be forgiven.

The gospel and my testimony of Jesus Christ have helped me to be a better mother, wife, sister, and friend. Because of my testimony, I try to live as God intends for me to—with integrity, honesty, kindness, love, patience, and compassion, treating others as children of God and extending service when needed. By my trying to live a Christlike life, I hope that others will want to learn about Him.

JoAnna M. Allen, Indiana, USA

of a heart broken by the sorrow he felt for his sins. As he came up out of the waters of baptism, he threw his arms around my neck, tears streaming down his cheeks, and said in my ear, "I'm clean. I'm clean."

Their choices to make the covenant of baptism sprang from a common faith. They knew that if they would keep a covenant to obey the Savior's commandments, He would keep His covenant with them to lead them toward eternal life. They were ready to come unto Him that they might be changed and led by Him and, in time, become like Him.

Strive to Become like Him

That leads to the third thing I have seen in the lives of those who have truly come unto Him. They strive to become like Him. They begin to try to do unto others as they know He would do. You and I have seen that in faithful people soon after their baptism and receiving of the Holy Ghost. Once, I went with my missionary companion to visit a family we had taught and baptized just a few weeks previously. The parents took us down into their basement to show us a room. It had been the bedroom of one of their two daughters. But she had now moved in with her sister. The bedroom she vacated was filled with everything the family would need in an emergency.

We had not taught them anything about emergency preparedness. When we asked why they had done something so difficult so quickly, the reply was that they had read in a Church magazine that the Lord would like families to be prepared to take care of themselves and others. They said, "Isn't that what Latter-day Saints do?"

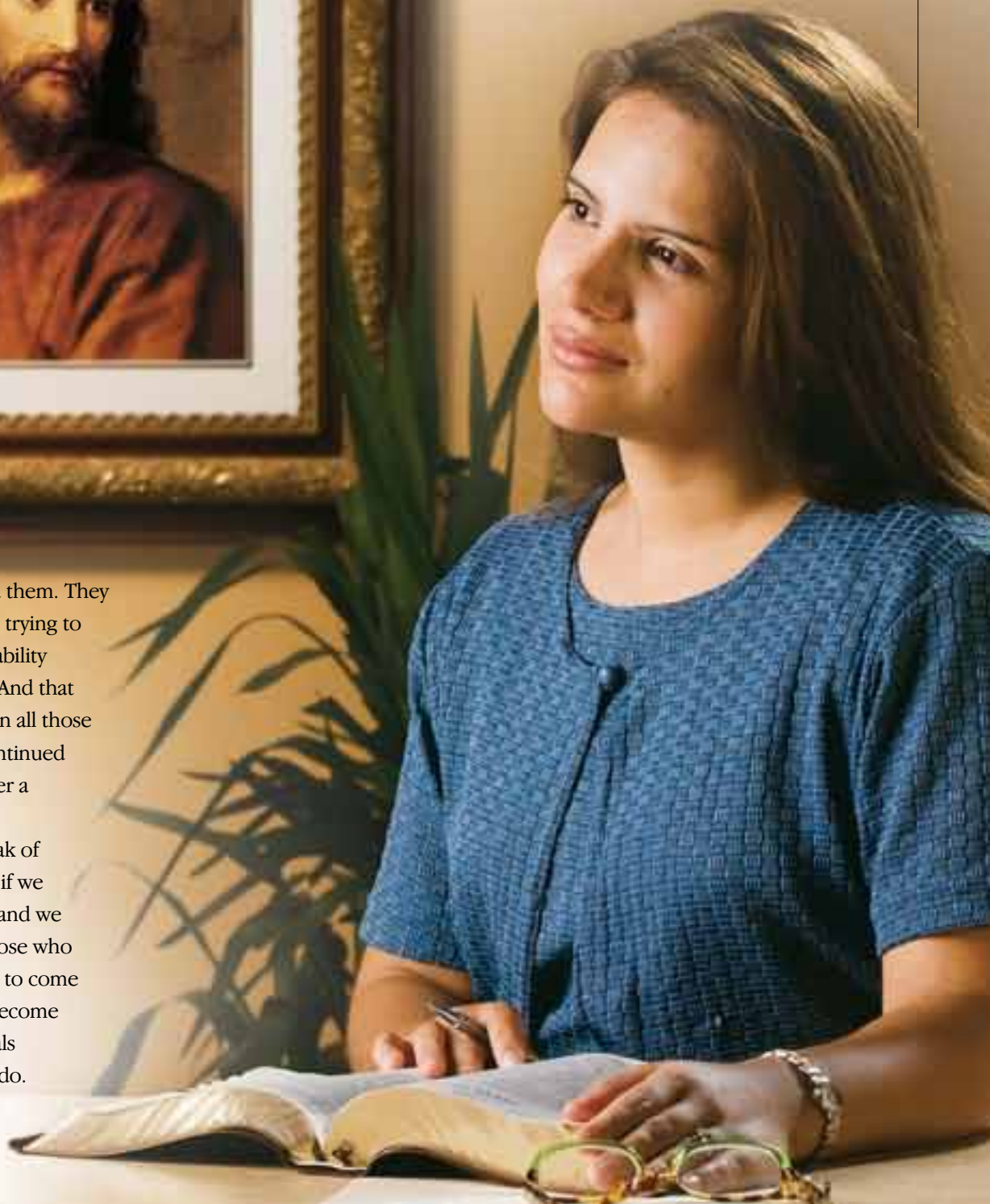
That simple faith extended to everything they felt the Savior would have them do. And their desire to follow Him



Yet we must remember that the best and surest friends they have are the Savior and His Father, who is also *their* Father. Heavenly Father and the Savior will send them the Holy Ghost to comfort them and confirm their faith if they are humbly

lasted. And it changed them. They had always been kind, trying to help others. But that ability to show charity grew. And that has been the pattern in all those I have known who continued to come unto Him over a lifetime.

We sometimes speak of retaining members as if we held them in. We can and we must be a friend to those who have made the choice to come unto Him. They can become discouraged when trials come, as trials always do.



obedient. So, for example, when going visiting teaching or home teaching with a new member, if you give him or her the chance to pray or to teach or to make the appointment, you may give him or her more strength than just your expressions of love. It will bring down the powers of heaven. And that will lift them through trials and protect them from pride when blessings begin to come to them, as blessings will.

A Change of Heart

Another wonderful thing will happen. When you give your heart to inviting people to come unto Christ, your heart will be changed. You will be doing His work for Him. You will find that He keeps His promise to be one with you in your service. You will come to know Him. And in time you will come to be like Him and “be perfected in him.”⁴ By helping others come unto Him, you will find that you have come unto Him yourself. If you want to be near Him, to feel His peace, you can do it best in His service.

He is the one who said:

“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

“Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

“For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”⁵

FINDING HAPPINESS THROUGH JESUS CHRIST

Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life” (John 14:6). There are no better words than His to express my testimony.

I have studied literature, philosophy, and history for an advanced degree and have realized that all great ideas, theories, and businesses have their limits. Likewise an earthly father cannot guarantee peace, wisdom, or eternity even to his own child.

However, our Heavenly Father has declared to the world that by following the path of Christ, emulating His example, and obeying His revealed truths, we can obtain true happiness in this life. And after this life—when we return to our Heavenly Father’s presence—we can have unending happiness with Him.

Zentz Lin, Taiwan

I testify that He will keep that promise to those we invite for Him. And He keeps that promise to those who serve Him by doing the inviting. ■

NOTES

1. D&C 20:59.
2. See Mosiah 18:8–10.
3. 2 Nephi 25:20.
4. Moroni 10:32.
5. Matthew 11:28–30.



PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRISTINA SMITH

Was I Saved?

BY CHARLOTTE GOODMAN McEWAN

My friend Rachel asked me if I would attend church with her. She was active in her own faith, and I was curious to see how her church was different from mine. I asked my parents for permission to go with her. They said that since her worship service time did not conflict with our meeting times, I could attend.

Many things about her church's service were unfamiliar to me: the songs and the prayers were different; the way the preacher spoke was unfamiliar. When the offering plate was circulated, I wasn't sure what to do.

Finally, the preacher asked anyone in the group who hadn't publicly accepted Jesus Christ as his or her Savior to come forward. Rachel whispered, encouraging me to go. I was hesitant. In our ward the bishop had never asked anyone to come forward and publicly accept Christ. I didn't know what to do. Perhaps I hadn't done something that was important for my salvation. I left the meeting confused.

As I thought about this experience later, I came to realize that I had indeed publicly accepted Jesus Christ as my Savior. I had been baptized by one having priesthood authority from Jesus Christ. My baptism was a covenant with Heavenly Father that I would take upon myself the name of Jesus Christ and be His disciple. I promised that I would keep His commandments and try to be like

Him. Present at my baptism were priesthood holders who acted as witnesses, as well as family and ward members.

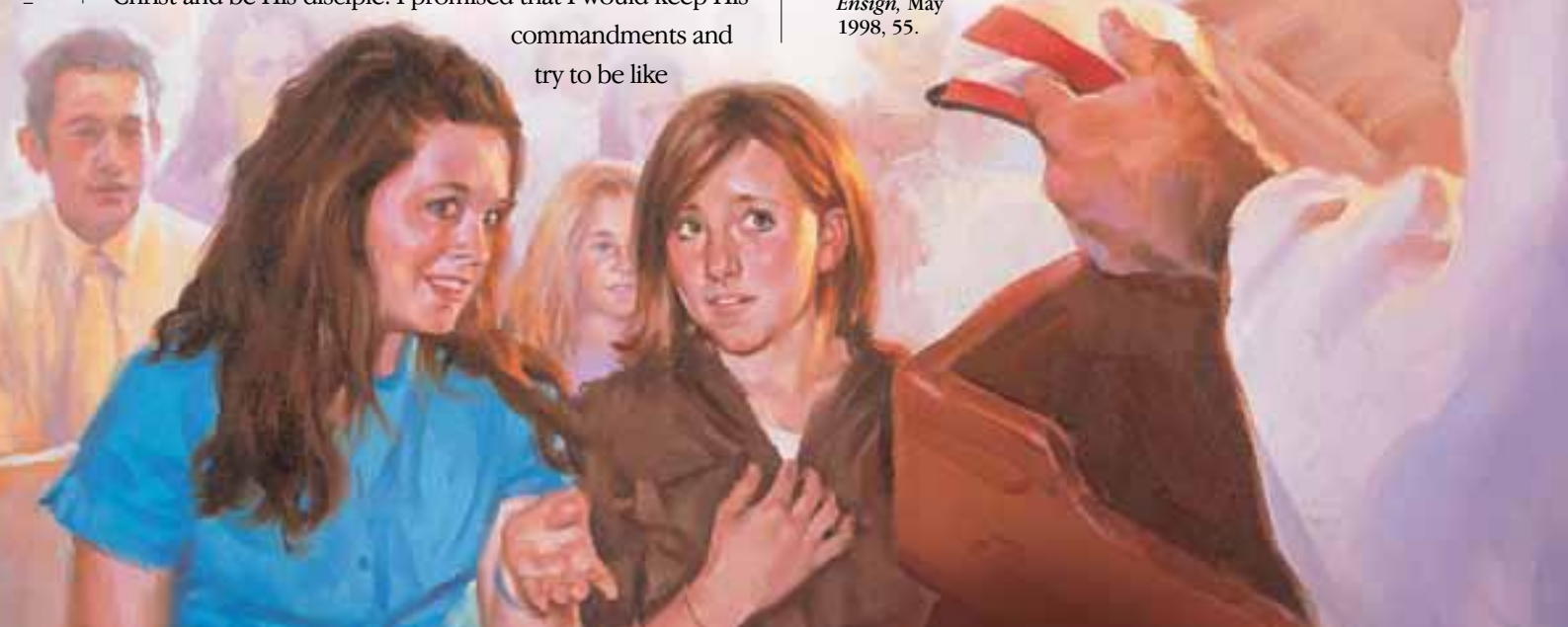
Since my baptism and confirmation, I have had the opportunity every Sunday to partake of the sacrament and witness once again to my Heavenly Father that I will continue to take upon myself the name of Christ.

Sometimes Christians from other churches may ask the same question my friend's preacher asked, only phrased differently. They may ask if we have been saved. Elder Dallin H. Oaks, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, has helped us understand and respond to this question: "Christian people sometimes attach different meanings to some key gospel terms like *saved* or *salvation*. If we answer according to what our questioner probably means in asking if we have been 'saved,' our answer must be 'yes.'"¹

I was still building my testimony of Jesus Christ when I attended my friend's church. Since then I have found that the more I study the gospel through the scriptures and the words of the living prophets, the more prepared and confident I am to stand as a witness of God at all times (see Mosiah 18:9). ■

NOTE

1. "Have You Been Saved?" *Ensign*, May 1998, 55.



We Believe

Here are brief answers to a few questions that members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are frequently asked.

What do Latter-day Saints believe about Jesus Christ? Was He literally resurrected from the dead? Will He come again to earth in glory? Is His grace necessary for a person to be saved?

These are a few of the questions people often pose when they encounter the Church or its members for the first time. In responding to questions, members should be prepared first and foremost to listen to the direction of the Holy Ghost. But the brief answers that follow may furnish material to consider as we try to formulate answers.

Do you believe in the historical Jesus Christ who lived and taught in the Holy Land, as recorded in the Bible?

Yes. We believe Jesus was born of Mary, preached in the Holy Land during a ministry of about three years, died on the cross, and was resurrected from the dead, just as prophets had foretold for centuries before His coming (see, for example, Genesis 49:10; Psalm 2:6–7; 22:16–18; 118:22; Isaiah 7:14; Micah 5:2). We believe that He suffered and atoned for the sins of all mankind, making repentance and forgiveness possible (see Isaiah 53:4–6). We believe that He overcame death and that through His power, every man and woman may be resurrected with physical bodies (see Romans 6:5; 8:11). We believe that through

obedience to the principles of His gospel, every son and daughter of God who comes to earth may gain salvation and return to live with our Father and His Son in Their kingdom in heaven (see 1 Peter 3:18; Articles of Faith 1:3).



Do you believe that the Lord was literally resurrected from the dead?

Yes. As His Apostles testified in the Bible, Jesus Christ was seen in His resurrected body by hundreds of witnesses (see Luke 24:39; John 20:20; 1 Corinthians 15:3–8). As a resurrected being, He ministered among thousands of His “other sheep” (John 10:16) in the Americas, showing them the wounds in His hands and feet and side and teaching among them for many days (see 3 Nephi 11–28).

Together with His Father, He appeared in 1820 to Joseph Smith Jr. The Lord directed this young prophet to restore His Church



and gospel because they had been changed to contain the philosophies of men after the death of the ancient Apostles. Joseph Smith and one of his associates offered this testimony of Jesus Christ in 1832: “He lives! For we saw him, even on the right hand of God; and we heard the voice bearing record that he is the Only Begotten of the Father” (D&C 76:22–23).

Do you believe He will come again to earth in glory?

Yes. As the holy scriptures testify: “This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven” (Acts 1:11). “For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth” (Job 19:25). “He shall come in the clouds of heaven to reign on the earth over his people” (D&C 76:63).

Further, we believe that because of His Resurrection, we too will receive our physical bodies again: “After my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God” (Job 19:26). “For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive” (1 Corinthians 15:22). “The death of Christ shall loose the bands of this temporal death, that all shall be raised from this temporal death. The spirit and the body shall be reunited again in its perfect form” (Alma 11:42–43).

Do you believe that His grace is necessary to our salvation?

Absolutely. Without the grace of Jesus Christ, no one could be saved or receive eternal blessings (see Romans 3:23–24). Through His grace, all will be resurrected and all who believe and follow Him may have eternal life (see John 3:15). Moreover, through His grace, our sacred relationships

W*e believe Jesus was born of Mary, preached in the Holy Land during a ministry of about three years, died on the cross, and was resurrected from the dead, just as prophets had foretold for centuries before His coming.*



As a resurrected being, He ministered among thousands of His “other sheep” in the Americas, showing them the wounds in His hands and feet and side and teaching among them for many days.

with spouses and family can continue through eternity (see Matthew 16:19; 1 Corinthians 11:11; D&C 132:19). These eternal blessings are His gifts to us; there is nothing we could do of ourselves alone that would merit or earn them.

Nevertheless, the scriptures make it clear that we receive the full blessings of His grace through our faith and obedience to His teachings. The Apostle Paul taught that we can’t save ourselves; we need the Lord’s grace: “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them” (Ephesians 2:8–10).

James explains: “Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. . . . Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only” (James 2:17, 24).

Thus the Savior could tell the rich young man who had been obedient and desired eternal life that there was yet more to do

(see Matthew 19:16–22; Luke 18:18–23).

Latter-day Saints believe that the grace of Christ extends in its full abundance to those who believe in Christ and do the works He taught. “We know that it is by grace that we are saved, *after all we can do*” (2 Nephi 25:23; emphasis added).

Although our good works cannot cleanse us of sin, they do show the sincerity of our faith in Jesus Christ and our faithfulness to the path He walked.

Do you believe that Joseph Smith is somehow as important as Jesus Christ in helping save people?

No. Joseph Smith was a prophet important to the history of humankind. The work he did under divine direction brought to earth blessings and knowledge that had been given to prophets of God and their followers in Old and New Testament times but that had been lost. Joseph Smith was, like those ancient prophets, a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ who taught that salvation and all the blessings of eternity could come only through our Savior: “The fundamental principles of our religion are the testimony of the Apostles and Prophets, concerning Jesus Christ, that He died, was buried, and rose again the third day, and ascended into heaven; and all other things which pertain to our religion are only appendages to it.”¹ On another occasion the Prophet taught, “When we reflect upon the holiness and perfections of our great Master, who has opened a way whereby we may come unto him, even the sacrifice of himself, our hearts melt within for his condescension.”² ■

NOTES

1. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 49.
2. *Teachings: Joseph Smith*, 54–55.



OTHER SOURCES OF INFORMATION

When people who inquire about our belief in Jesus Christ want more information than we can readily give, we might suggest that they:

- Examine the Book of Mormon: Another Testament of Jesus Christ. The book tells of the Savior's ministry among people in the Americas following His Resurrection and Ascension, as recorded in the Bible. His teachings to believers in the ancient Americas parallel the teachings given to His disciples during His mortal ministry in the Holy Land. Book of Mormon prophets teach and testify repeatedly of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

- Talk with Latter-day Saint missionaries, who are called to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ but will respect the decision of those who choose not to accept their teachings.

- Visit www.mormon.org. Select "Basic Beliefs" or "Ask a Question."

- Visit www.lds.org (available in English). Select "About the Church" then "Answers to Questions," where they can research topics of interest to them. Or at the home page, they can select "Gospel Library" and then "Search Gospel Library" to research a topic in the Church magazines and other Church publications. ■

Becoming a
Witness of Christ



BY ELDER D. TODD CHRISTOFFERSON
Of the Presidency of the Seventy

Apostles, by virtue of their priesthood office, are commissioned as special witnesses of Christ in all the world (see D&C 107:23). Their testimony is vital in the Lord's work of salvation. Yet the Apostles must not and do not stand alone. All of us who are baptized and confirmed have taken upon us the name of Jesus Christ with a commitment "to stand as witnesses of God at all times and in all things, and in all places" (Mosiah 18:9). It is within the capacity of each of us to become His witness. Indeed, the Lord relies on "the weak and the simple" to declare His gospel (see D&C 1:19, 23), and it is His desire "that every man might speak in the name of God the Lord, even the Savior of the world" (D&C 1:20).

Consider some ways a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints can be a witness of Christ.

We are witnesses of Christ when we receive a sure, personal testimony that He lives.

Being a witness of Jesus Christ in the most fundamental sense is to possess a sure, personal testimony that He is the divine Son of God, the Savior and Redeemer of the world. The ancient Apostles knew that Jesus was the promised Messiah and spoke from personal experience of His literal Resurrection. Nevertheless, a witness of Christ does not need to have seen Him or entered into His presence. When Peter testified to Jesus, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," the Lord responded that this knowledge came not as a consequence of Peter's physical proximity or experiences with Jesus but because His

Father in Heaven had revealed it to him (see Matthew 16:15–17). Jesus made it plain to Thomas that one could have the same belief or witness Thomas had received without touching and seeing Him: "Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed" (John 20:29).

Our witness of Christ typically begins with the testimony of others—people we know or know about and trust. We have the recorded testimony of the Apostles that "this Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we are all witnesses" (Acts 2:32). We have the Old and New Testaments of His foreordination, ministry, and Atonement. We have another testament, the Book of Mormon, the central purpose of which is "the convincing of the Jew and Gentile that Jesus is the Christ, the Eternal God, manifesting himself unto all nations."¹ We have the Prophet Joseph Smith's testimony that he saw and heard the Father point to Jesus and declare, "*This is My Beloved Son*" (Joseph Smith—History 1:17), and the Prophet's later attestation that "after the many testimonies which have been given of him, this is the testimony, last of all, which we give of him: That he lives! For we saw him, even on the right hand of God; and we heard the voice bearing record that he is the Only Begotten of the Father" (D&C 76:22–23). We have the special witnesses of our own time who live among us and from whom, with our own eyes and ears, we receive a confirming testimony. Many are further blessed to hear the testimonies of parents, grandparents, and faithful friends.

Those who enter into the covenant of



It is within the capacity of each of us to become His witness.



A PERSONAL TESTIMONY OF THE SAVIOR

I suppose my baptism when I was a child of 11 years marked the beginning of my testimony of Him whose Church I was joining. Since then I have had a desire to follow the teachings of Jesus Christ and live the principles of the gospel.

Gaining my testimony of Jesus Christ has been a gradual process and has been increased by active participation in the Church. I have often sensed of His great love for us through the beauties of nature, and this brings me a greater appreciation of Him. I have felt the Spirit witnessing to me as I have fasted and prayed and received answers to those prayers, knowing that Jesus Christ is the mediator between Heavenly Father and us. I have enjoyed a closeness to Him in my frequent temple worship.

Throughout my life my testimony has grown and been strengthened until today there is no doubt in my mind that Jesus Christ is the Son of God—my Savior and Redeemer. This knowledge brings me a quiet assurance and peace.

Joyce Bowler, England

baptism receive a special endowment of faith in Jesus Christ, and with the gift of the Holy Ghost comes the witness that the testimonies we have received concerning Christ are true. Nephi affirmed that this would happen: “And then are ye in this strait and narrow path which leads to eternal life; yea, ye have entered in by the gate; ye have done according to the commandments of the Father and the Son; and ye have received the Holy Ghost, *which witnesses of the Father and the Son*, unto the fulfilling of the promise which he hath made, that if ye entered in by the way ye should receive” (2 Nephi 31:18; emphasis added).

It is a spiritual gift to believe the words of others and a further gift “given by the Holy Ghost to know that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and that he was crucified for the sins of the world” (D&C 46:13).

This witness often comes in feelings—a burning, a peace, a feeling of assurance, a sense of enlightenment. The Lord gave Oliver Cowdery a witness of the Book of Mormon by spiritual feelings that confirmed “that the words or the work which thou hast been writing are true” (D&C 6:17). The Lord then added, “If you desire a further witness, cast your mind upon the night that you cried unto me in your heart, that you might know concerning the truth of these things. Did I not speak peace to your mind concerning the matter? What greater witness can you have than from God?” (D&C 6:22–23). The Spirit speaking peace

to one’s mind is not the only form in which a witness comes, but inasmuch as it is from God, there is none greater. Just as by feasting on the words of Christ in the scriptures we “can testify that [we] have heard [His] voice, and know [His] words” (D&C 18:36), we can testify from confirming spiritual feelings from God that we know His Son and that He lives.

We are witnesses of Christ when we live so as to reflect His teachings.

During His ministry in the Western Hemisphere, the Savior gave this commandment: “Hold up your light that it may shine unto the world. Behold I am the light which ye shall hold up—that which ye have seen me do” (3 Nephi 18:24). People should be able to see in us something of Jesus Christ. The way we act, speak, look, and even think will reflect Him and His ways. Alma expressed it as having experienced a mighty change in our hearts and having received His image in our countenances (see Alma 5:14). In this same vein, the Lord commanded that we be even as He is (see 3 Nephi 27:27). Although we were not present with Him in His ministry, as we search the scriptures, we *see* Jesus and what He said and did. And as we emulate that pattern, we bear witness of Him.

I recall the example of a Catholic priest I came to know as we worked together in community service activities in Nashville, Tennessee. Father Charles Strobel developed a



project to bring homeless men off the street a few at a time into a training program that provided life skills and vocational opportunities for them. He devoted untold hours to helping these men make permanent changes for the better and become self-reliant. I was surprised to learn that his mother had been killed by a homeless man not many years earlier. Father Strobel's Christlike love extended even to men among whom was found one who had violently taken his precious mother's life.

The central message of the apostles and prophets in all ages is the need to repent to receive a remission of sins through the Atonement of Jesus Christ. Our own repentance bears testimony of Him and the power of His grace to pardon and cleanse us. We need not have achieved perfection for our witness to be valid so long as we are striving to conform our lives to the Savior's standard. President Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994) wisely counseled patience as well as diligence in this process:

"Becoming Christlike is a lifetime pursuit and very often involves growth and change that is slow, almost imperceptible. . . .

" . . . For every Paul, for every Enos, and for every King Lamoni, there are hundreds and thousands of people who find the process of repentance much more subtle, much more imperceptible. Day by day they move closer to the Lord, little realizing they are building a godlike life. They live quiet lives of goodness, service, and commitment. They are like the Lamanites, who the Lord said 'were baptized with fire and with the Holy Ghost, *and they knew it not*' (3 Ne. 9:20; italics added)."²

We are witnesses of Christ when we help others come unto Him.

Nephi recounted in a joyous expression, "We talk of Christ, we rejoice in Christ, we preach of Christ, we prophesy of Christ, and we write according to our prophecies, that our children may know to what source they

People should be able to see in us something of Jesus Christ. The way we act, speak, look, and even think should reflect Him and His ways.

LIVING TO REFLECT HIS TEACHINGS

I was in my fifth year of studying humanities when I received a lesson about the worth of an example. Every time our teacher entered the classroom, he found a picture of himself—drawn by some of my classmates—on the blackboard. And every time, the professor would ask us to wipe away the drawing. However, he never said anything else about it.

I was very impressed with our professor's wise and humble way of being, and I became curious about which church he belonged to. I found out that he was a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

I decided to receive the missionary discussions, and I was baptized on September 10, 2000. The man who had shown me an example through his way of living turned out to be my branch president.

I testify that Jesus is our ultimate example. Emulating Him is the reason for us, as Latter-day Saints, to lead good lives. Then we too can teach through example.

Kimba Kabangu, Democratic Republic of Congo



may look for a remission of their sins” (2 Nephi 25:26). We can likewise be active in helping others, particularly our children, come unto Christ.

Nephi’s phrase “we talk of Christ” suggests that we are not reluctant to talk about our feelings regarding the Savior in conversations and informal settings. Often these are one-on-one situations where in open and friendly ways we can discuss who He is and what He did and taught, encouraging others also to love and follow Him.

“We rejoice in Christ” implies that we live with a generally happy outlook that reflects our faith in Christ. We know that “his grace is sufficient” for us to be redeemed from death and sin and to be perfected in Him (see Moroni 10:32–33). While we face

disappointments and even tragedies, we know that because of Him, our eternal happiness is assured. As our faith in Jesus Christ shines through, we show others who “labour and are heavy laden” how to find rest in Him (see Matthew 11:28–30).

“We preach of Christ” certainly has reference to full-time and member missionary work but also includes what we do in worship services, Sunday School classes, and similar settings where He is the subject of study and instruction. Our participation as both teachers and students is part of our bearing witness of Him, and the personal study underlying that participation further witnesses of our belief.

“We prophesy of Christ” means that we express our testimony of Him by the power of the Spirit (see



anticipation of the “great and dreadful day of the Lord” (Malachi 4:5–6; see also D&C 2; 128:17–18), we testify that Christ will come again and that our hearts must be turned to our fathers to prepare for His coming (see Malachi 4:6; D&C 2:2).

“And we write according to our prophecies” suggests the wisdom of making a permanent record of our testimony of Christ. We understand that the testimonies we bear are “recorded in heaven for the angels to look upon; and they rejoice over [us]” (D&C 62:3).

Our own descendants and others may look upon and rejoice over our witness of Christ written or recorded for their benefit even before some of them were born.

As you feel the Holy Spirit’s testimony of Him, confirmed and reconfirmed to your spirit in many different experiences and settings, as you strive to hold up the light of His example in your own life day by day, and as you bear testimony to others and help them learn of and follow Him, you are a witness of Jesus Christ. God grant you the desire of your heart to be among those “who received the testimony of Jesus” (D&C 76:51) and were faithful to that testimony throughout mortal life (see D&C 138:12). ■

NOTES

1. Book of Mormon title page.
2. “A Mighty Change of Heart,” *Tambuli*, Mar. 1990, 7; *Ensign*, Oct. 1989, 5.

HELPING OTHERS COME UNTO HIM

“Sister Hopkins, these are the 10 Sunbeams you will be teaching this year,” the counselor in the Primary presidency announced. I was a new convert, and I admit that this calling terrified me. How could I teach what I did not yet have a firm understanding of? How would I handle so many energetic children? But the bishop and Primary president assured me I would be blessed for tackling this daunting calling.

I knew I’d have to pour myself into learning the gospel in order to teach it, so each week I read the manual—a source of abundant gospel light—and prayed and pondered how the principles applied to my life and to the children’s. As I studied and taught, I gained a testimony of our divine birthright as children of God. I discovered the worth and uniqueness of each soul. Simple Primary lessons not only illuminated the faces of His precious children, but they also blossomed the seed of testimony I had had when I entered the waters of baptism.

That precious year with the Sunbeams has made me forever grateful for a calling that changed my life. I was changed, as were the children, by the teachings of Jesus Christ.

Trish Isabella Hopkins, Maine, USA



1 Corinthians 12:3). “The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy” (Revelation 19:10). As those who anciently prophesied of His first advent, we also confirm in word and deed the prophecies of His Second Coming. By performing baptisms and other sacred ordinances for our ancestors through the priesthood authority restored by Elijah in

Worship through the HYMNS

We can come closer to our Savior through music.

I wish I could sing like Sister Schneider. I wish I could play the piano like Brother Menendez.

How many times have we heard or thought such things? Sometimes we think of musical talent as a special gift that belongs only to others, a beautiful talent we value but think we do not have.

In The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, music and singing are for everyone. Through the hymns, we can express gratitude and praise,

learn the Savior's restored gospel, remember His Atonement, and commit to follow Him.

Express Gratitude and Praise

When ancient Israel was delivered from Egypt, "then sang Moses and the children of Israel [a] song unto the Lord" (Exodus 15:1). As the Jaredites crossed the ocean, "they did sing praises unto the Lord" (Ether 6:9). And when the early Latter-day Saints dedicated the Kirtland Temple, they sang

William W. Phelps's new hymn "The Spirit of God Like a Fire Is Burning."¹ In every dispensation of the gospel, the children of God have lifted their voices to praise Him with music.

Many of our hymns today share in this spirit of rejoicing and praise. For example, another beloved hymn by William W. Phelps proclaims:

*Redeemer of Israel,
Our only delight,
On whom for a blessing we call,
Our shadow by day
And our pillar by night,
Our King, our Deliv'rer, our all!²*

Hymns can also give voice to our gratitude for specific blessings, as expressed in this familiar verse:

*We thank thee, O God, for a prophet
To guide us in these latter days.
We thank thee for sending the gospel
To lighten our minds with its rays.
We thank thee for every blessing
Bestowed by thy bounteous hand.
We feel it a pleasure to serve thee,
And love to obey thy command.³*

As we sing these hymns, we follow the command "If thou art merry"—

JESUS LOVES US

One day I was sitting on the sofa listening to a CD. When the hymn "Teach Me to Walk in the Light" (*Hymns*, no. 304) came on, I thought about Jesus Christ's sacrifice for each of us. I remembered His love, humility, and compassion, and I felt my heart fill with gratitude. The Lord's Spirit testified to me that the Savior loves us.

My two-year-old son was sitting beside me, looking at pictures of Jesus Christ. He must have felt something as well because he looked up at me and said, "Mommy, Jesus loves you!"

Jesus Christ is a part of my and my family's lives. He is in my thoughts and heart. His gospel has changed my life.

Tamara Miranda Macário de Oliveira, Brazil



meaning if you are joyful or happy—“praise the Lord with singing, with music, . . . and with a prayer of praise and thanksgiving” (D&C 136:28).

Learn His Gospel

In addition to expressing gratitude and praise, the hymns also give us opportunities to learn the gospel of Jesus Christ. For example, this familiar children’s hymn explains very simply and beautifully our relationship with our Father in Heaven:

*I am a child of God,
And he has sent me here,
Has given me an earthly home
With parents kind and dear.⁴*

Other hymns show us how to live gospel principles, such as this favorite hymn, written in the pioneer era:

*Come, come, ye Saints, no toil nor
labor fear;
But with joy wend your way.
Though hard to you this journey
may appear,
Grace shall be as your day.
'Tis better far for us to strive
Our useless cares from us to drive;
Do this, and joy your hearts will swell—
All is well! All is well!⁵*

Some of our most beloved hymns teach us to follow Christ’s servants, His chosen prophets in our day. “Praise to the Man,” for instance, helps us remember the important role of the Prophet Joseph Smith in the Restoration of the gospel:

*Praise to the man who communed with
Jehovah!*



*Jesus anointed that Prophet and Seer.
Blessed to open the last dispensation,
Kings shall extol him, and nations
revere.⁶*

Pondering these and other hymns and studying the scripture references listed in the hymnbook can help us learn the gospel and remember the Savior in our daily lives.

Remember His Atonement

One of the most important ways we remember the Savior is to partake of the sacrament each week. In preparation for this sacred event, we sing a hymn. Sacrament hymns remind us of Christ's sacrifice and its meaning for us:

*Behold the great Redeemer die,
A broken law to satisfy.
He dies a sacrifice for sin, . . .
That man may live and glory win.⁷*

*His precious blood he freely spilt;
His life he freely gave,
A sinless sacrifice for guilt,
A dying world to save.⁸*

*I think of his hands pierced and bleeding
to pay the debt.
Such mercy, such love, and devotion can
I forget?
No, no, I will praise and adore at the
mercy seat,
Until at the glorified throne I kneel at
his feet.⁹*

If sung thoughtfully and prayerfully, the words of sacrament hymns help us focus on the Savior. They prepare us to take the sacrament meaningfully and to recommit to take Christ's name upon us, to always remember Him, and to keep His commandments.

Commit to Follow Jesus Christ

Commitment to follow the Savior is expressed in many of our hymns. As we sing these hymns, we testify to our Father in Heaven that we desire to follow His Son. For example, consider these lines:

*Father in Heaven, we thank thee this day
For loving guidance to show us the way.
Grateful, we praise thee with songs of
delight!
Gladly, gladly we'll walk in the light.¹⁰*

The hymn "I'll Go Where You Want Me to Go" makes a similar declaration:

COUNTING MY BLESSINGS

I have now been a member of the Church for 15 years. Throughout these years there have been tests and challenges. But there are many, many more reasons to kneel down and thank God for His infinite love.

As the hymn says:

*So amid the conflict, whether great or small,
Do not be discouraged; God is over all.
Count your many blessings; angels will attend,
Help and comfort give you to your journey's end.
("Count Your Blessings," Hymns, no. 241)*

Whenever I have the opportunity to, I declare that we can find joy in this life and a fulness of joy in eternity. I testify that God made it possible and that, thanks to the Savior, we can live with Them forever.

Maribel Loayza de Aranda, Argentina

I FELT GUIDED

When I was laboring as a young missionary in Norway, my mission president called the missionaries together to tell us we had been asked to sing for two sessions at the 1958 dedication of the London England Temple. I was asked to be the accompanist.

When we arrived at the temple, I discovered to my surprise that I would be playing an organ instead of a piano. I had no experience with this organ, so I had to ask if someone could help me set the stops. Heavenly Father heard my desperate pleas, and a sister came to my rescue, setting the organ for quiet prelude and also for accompanying the choir.

Amid my desperation, I had a calm feeling come over me. And as I played the unfamiliar and unpracticed-on organ, I felt the love of the Savior guiding me. After one choir number, President David O. McKay looked at our mission president and said, “Well done.” I was overcome with emotion at how we had been blessed in our performance. It had been flawless.

Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the Only Begotten of the Father. He is the holy Messiah, the Prince of Peace. He lives and will come again.

Richard Broberg, Idaho, USA

*So trusting my all to thy tender care,
And knowing thou lovest me,
I'll do thy will with a heart sincere:
I'll be what you want me to be.¹¹*

Our songs—whether of praise, gratitude, knowledge, remembrance, or commitment—are pleasing to the Lord. He has said, “My soul delighteth in the song of the heart; yea, the song of the righteous is a prayer unto me, and it shall be answered with a blessing upon their heads” (D&C 25:12).

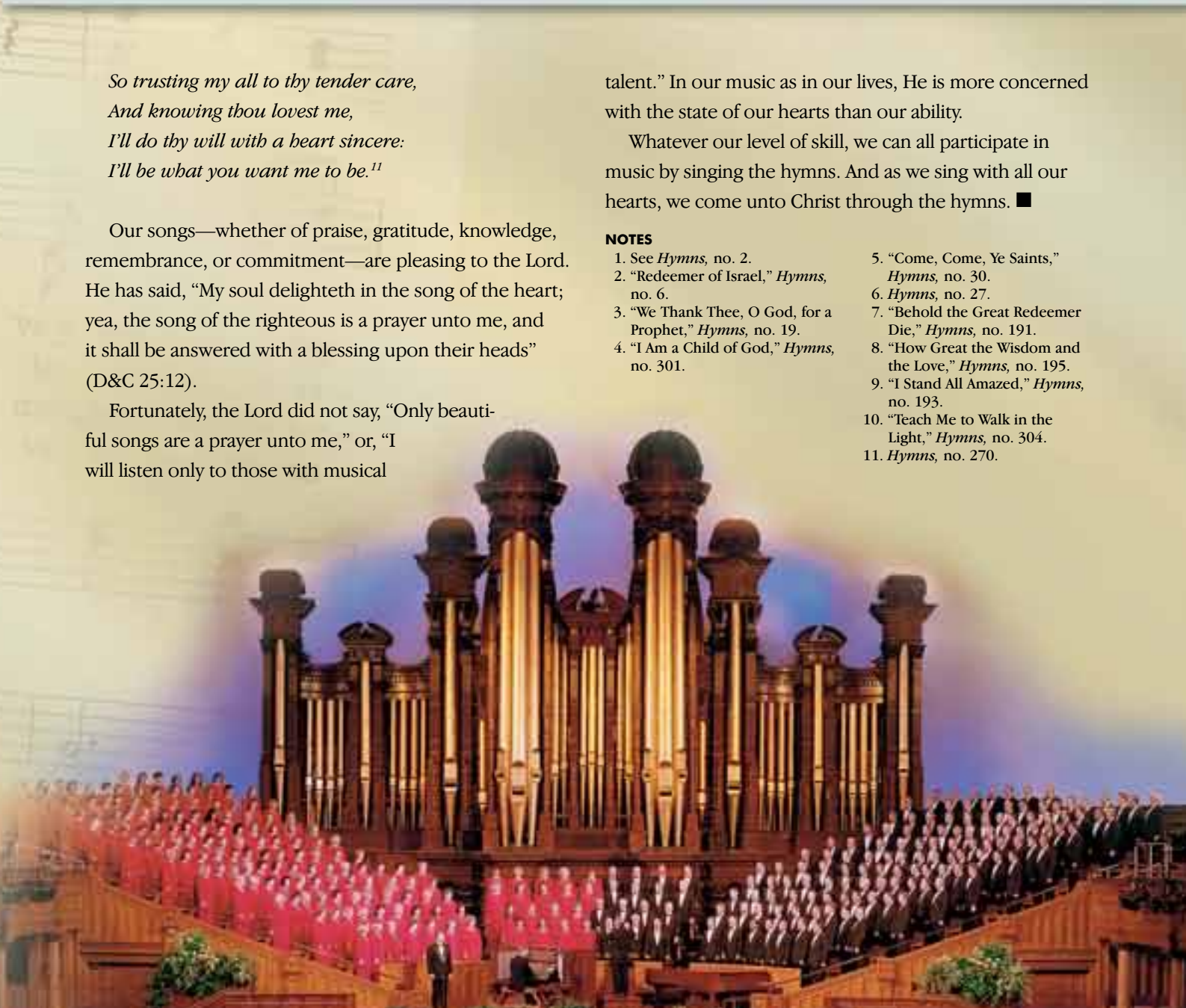
Fortunately, the Lord did not say, “Only beautiful songs are a prayer unto me,” or, “I will listen only to those with musical

talent.” In our music as in our lives, He is more concerned with the state of our hearts than our ability.

Whatever our level of skill, we can all participate in music by singing the hymns. And as we sing with all our hearts, we come unto Christ through the hymns. ■

NOTES

1. See *Hymns*, no. 2.
2. “Redeemer of Israel,” *Hymns*, no. 6.
3. “We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet,” *Hymns*, no. 19.
4. “I Am a Child of God,” *Hymns*, no. 301.
5. “Come, Come, Ye Saints,” *Hymns*, no. 30.
6. *Hymns*, no. 27.
7. “Behold the Great Redeemer Die,” *Hymns*, no. 191.
8. “How Great the Wisdom and the Love,” *Hymns*, no. 195.
9. “I Stand All Amazed,” *Hymns*, no. 193.
10. “Teach Me to Walk in the Light,” *Hymns*, no. 304.
11. *Hymns*, no. 270.



Plain & Precious Truths

We are blessed to have latter-day scripture as well as the Bible to teach us about and testify of Jesus Christ. Below are 25 truths about the Savior with corresponding scriptures and teachings of latter-day prophets. (This chart is not a comprehensive list of teachings on these topics. For more on these topics, see “The Living Christ: The Testimony of the Apostles,” on page 42 of this issue.)

Doctrine	From the Bible	From Latter-day Scripture and Prophets
1 The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are three separate and distinct personages.	“There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one” (1 John 5:7; see also Matthew 3:16–17; Acts 7:55).	“I have always declared God to be a distinct personage, Jesus Christ a separate and distinct personage from God the Father, and that the Holy Ghost was a distinct personage and a Spirit: and these three constitute three distinct personages and three Gods” (Joseph Smith, <i>Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith</i> [2007], 41–42).
2 The Father and Son have bodies of flesh and bones; the Holy Ghost is a personage of spirit.	“Handle me and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have” (Luke 24:39; see also Genesis 5:1; John 14:9; Philippians 3:21).	“The Father has a body of flesh and bones as tangible as man’s; the Son also; but the Holy Ghost has not a body of flesh and bones, but is a personage of Spirit. Were it not so, the Holy Ghost could not dwell in us” (D&C 130:22; see also 3 Nephi 11:13–15).
3 The three members of the Godhead are perfectly united in purpose.	“Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are” (John 17:11).	“They are distinct beings, but they are one in purpose and effort. They are united as one in bringing to pass the grand, divine plan for the salvation and exaltation of the children of God” (Gordon B. Hinckley, “In These Three I Believe,” <i>Liabona and Ensign</i> , July 2006, 8; see also 3 Nephi 11:27).
4 God’s work and glory is to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man.	“But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel” (2 Timothy 1:10; see also John 3:16–17; 1 Corinthians 15:22; Hebrews 9:11–12, 28).	“For behold, this is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man” (Moses 1:39; see also D&C 29:43).

Doctrine	From the Bible	From Latter-day Scripture and Prophets
<p>5 Jesus Christ was in the beginning with the Father and is the Firstborn.</p> <p>6 In the premortal world, Heavenly Father chose Jesus Christ to be the Savior.</p> <p>7 Under the direction of His Father, Jesus was the Creator of the earth.</p> <p>8 Jesus Christ is Jehovah of the Old Testament.</p>	<p>“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.</p> <p>“The same was in the beginning with God” (John 1:1–2; see also Romans 8:29; Hebrews 1:5–6).</p> <p>“[Christ] was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you” (1 Peter 1:20; see also Revelation 13:8).</p> <p>“All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made” (John 1:3; see also Isaiah 40:28; Colossians 1:16).</p> <p>“Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am” (John 8:58; see also Genesis 22:14; 1 Corinthians 10:1–4).</p>	<p>“I was in the beginning with the Father, and am the Firstborn” (D&C 93:21; see also 3 Nephi 9:15; Moses 2:26).</p> <p>“My Beloved Son, which was my Beloved and Chosen from the beginning, said unto me—Father, thy will be done, and the glory be thine forever” (Moses 4:2; see also Ether 3:14).</p> <p>“Behold, I am Jesus Christ the Son of God. I created the heavens and the earth, and all things that in them are” (3 Nephi 9:15; see also Mosiah 3:8; Moses 1:33).</p> <p>“We carry in our hearts a firm and unshakable conviction of the divine mission of the Lord Jesus Christ. He was the great Jehovah of the Old Testament, the Creator who, under the direction of His Father, made all things” (Gordon B. Hinckley, “A Season for Gratitude,” <i>Liabona</i> and <i>Ensign</i>, Dec. 1997, 4; see also Abraham 2:8).</p>

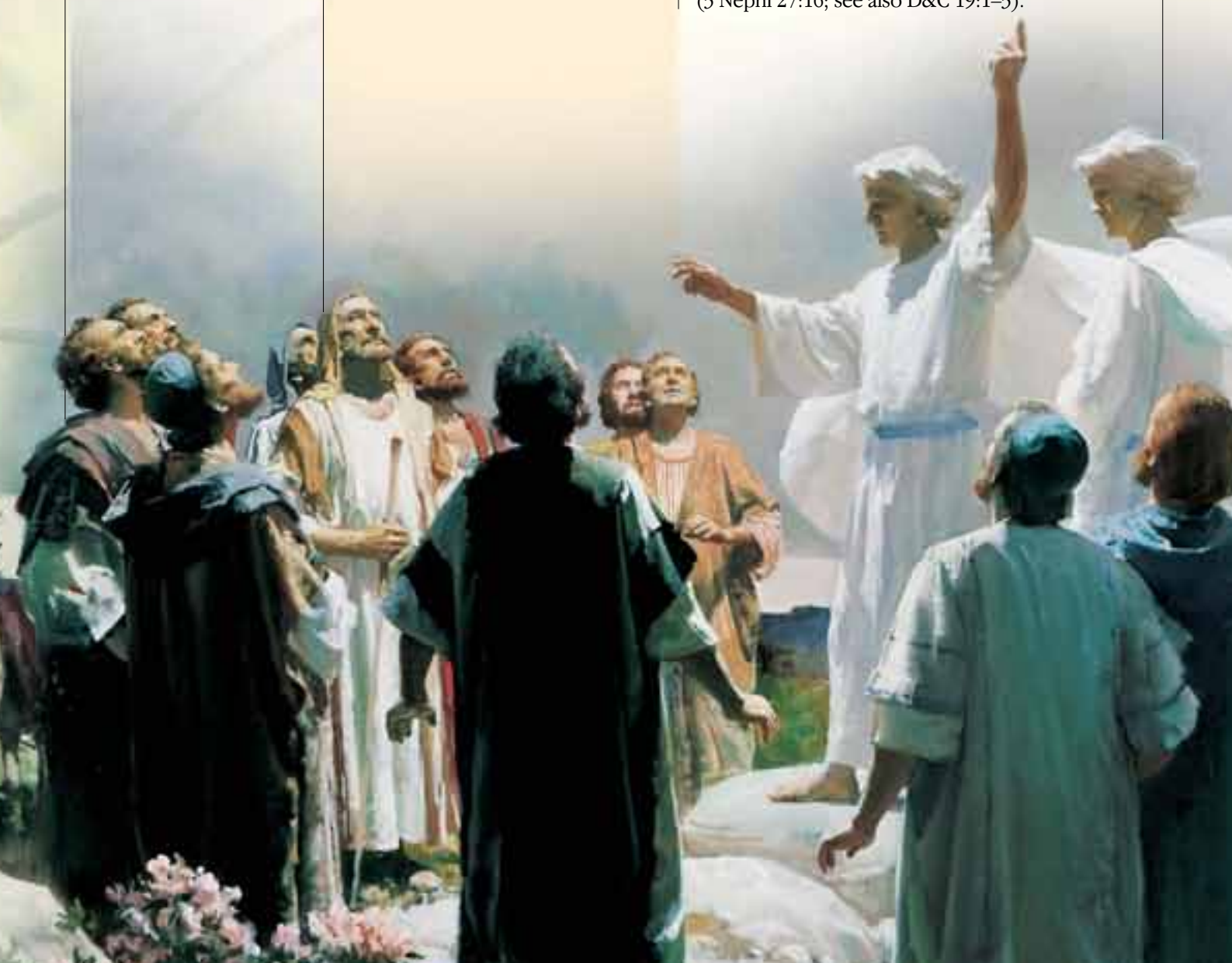
Doctrine	From the Bible	From Latter-day Scripture and Prophets
<p>9 Jesus is the Only Begotten of the Father in the flesh.</p> <p>10 Jesus is the perfect example for humankind.</p> <p>11 When the Lord began His mortal ministry, He established His Church.</p> <p>12 The Savior gave His life to atone for the sins of all humankind.</p>	<p>“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth” (John 1:14; see also John 3:16).</p> <p>“For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you” (John 13:15; see also 1 Peter 2:21).</p> <p>“And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; “For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ” (Ephesians 4:11–12; see also Matthew 16:18; Luke 6:13).</p> <p>“This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins” (Matthew 26:28; see also Isaiah 53:5–6; 1 John 2:1–2).</p>	<p>“I know that Jesus Christ shall come, yea, the Son, the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace, and mercy, and truth. And behold, it is he that cometh to take away the sins of the world, yea, the sins of every man who steadfastly believeth on his name” (Alma 5:48; see also Alma 9:26; D&C 93:11).</p> <p>“One of the main purposes of our existence is that we might conform to the image and likeness of him who sojourned in the flesh without blemish—immaculate, pure, and spotless! Christ came not only to atone for the sins of the world, but to set an example before all man and to establish the standard of God’s perfection, of God’s law, and of obedience to the Father” (Joseph F. Smith, <i>Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph F. Smith</i> [1998], 151; see also 2 Nephi 31:16; 3 Nephi 18:16).</p> <p>“We believe in the same organization that existed in the Primitive Church, namely, apostles, prophets, pastors, teachers, evangelists, and so forth” (Articles of Faith 1:6; see also 3 Nephi 12:1).</p> <p>“For behold, I, God, have suffered these things for all, that they might not suffer if they would repent; . . .</p> <p>“Which suffering caused myself, even God, the greatest of all, to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore, and to suffer both body and spirit—and would that I might not drink the bitter cup, and shrink—</p> <p>“Nevertheless, glory be to the Father, and I partook and finished my preparations unto the children of men” (D&C 19:16, 18–19; see also 1 Nephi 11:32–33).</p>

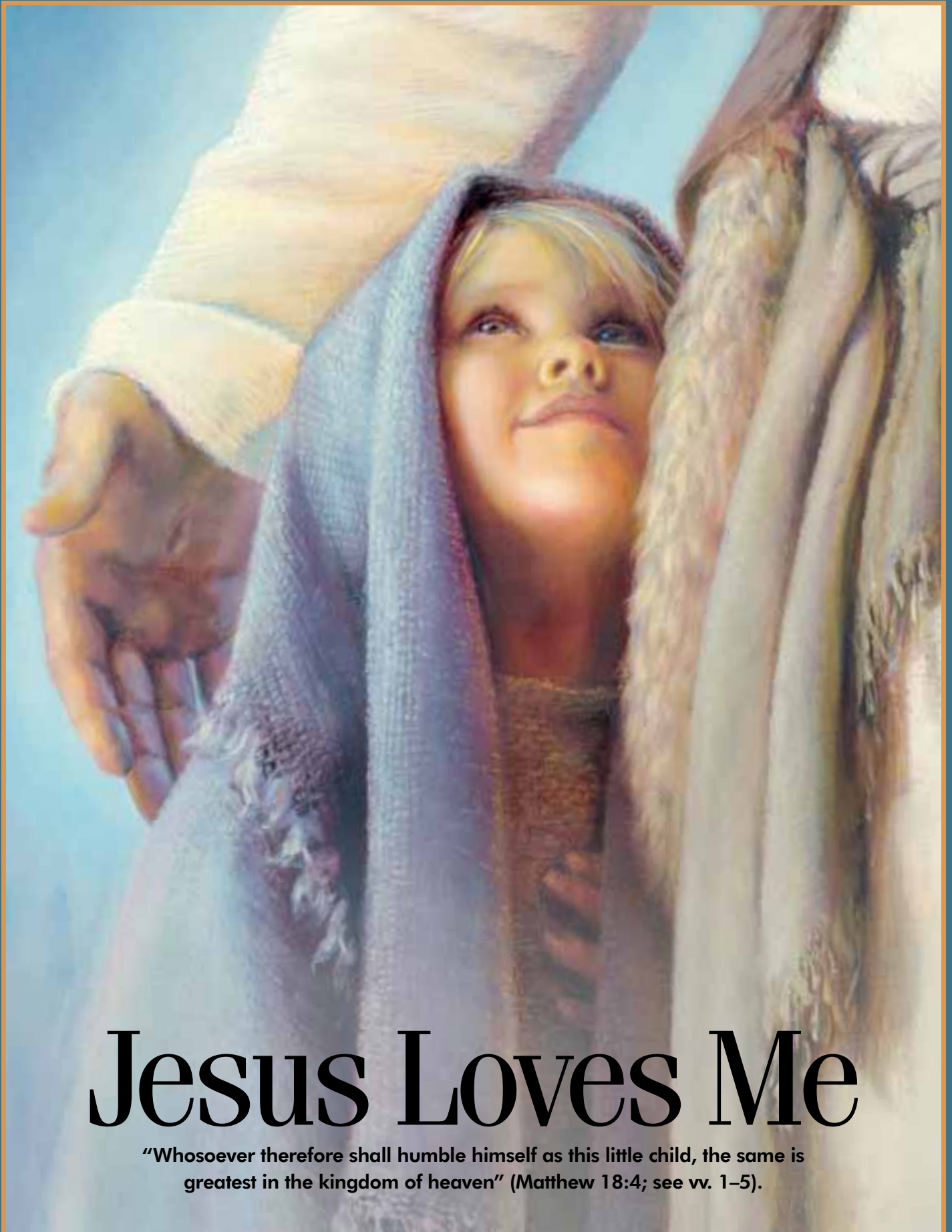


Doctrine	From the Bible	From Latter-day Scripture and Prophets
<p>13 Jesus alone was able to pay the penalty for our sins.</p>	<p>“Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).</p>	<p>“He was <i>able</i> to accomplish His mission because He was the Son of God and He possessed the power of God. . . .</p> <p>“No mortal being had the power or capability to redeem all other mortals from their lost and fallen condition, nor could any other voluntarily forfeit his life and thereby bring to pass a universal resurrection for all other mortals.</p> <p>“Only Jesus Christ was able and willing to accomplish such a redeeming act of love” (Ezra Taft Benson, “Jesus Christ—Our Savior and Redeemer,” <i>Tambuli</i>, Dec. 1990, 5; <i>Ensign</i>, June 1990, 4; see also Alma 34:8–10).</p>
<p>14 Jesus has broken the bands of death.</p>	<p>“But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept” (1 Corinthians 15:20; see also John 14:19; 1 Corinthians 15:54).</p>	<p>“Now, there is a death which is called a temporal death; and the death of Christ shall loose the bands of this temporal death, that all shall be raised from this temporal death” (Alma 11:42; see also Mosiah 16:7–8; Alma 22:14).</p>
<p>15 Jesus is the Savior and Redeemer of the world.</p>	<p>“And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world” (1 John 4:14; see also Luke 2:11).</p>	<p>“He cometh into the world that he may save all men if they will hearken unto his voice; for behold, he suffereth the pains of all men, yea, the pains of every living creature, both men, women, and children” (2 Nephi 9:21; see also D&C 66:1; Moses 1:6).</p>
<p>16 Jesus is the Messiah of the New Testament.</p>	<p>“The woman saith unto him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things.</p> <p>“Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he” (John 4:25–26; see also Luke 4:16–21).</p>	<p>“Yea, even six hundred years from the time that my father left Jerusalem, a prophet would the Lord God raise up among the Jews—even a Messiah, or, in other words, a Savior of the world” (1 Nephi 10:4; see also 2 Nephi 2:26; Moses 7:53).</p>
<p>17 The Lord ministered among His “other sheep” in the ancient Americas.</p>	<p>“Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd” (John 10:16).</p>	<p>“And verily I say unto you, that ye are they of whom I said: Other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd” (3 Nephi 15:21; see also 3 Nephi 19:2–3; 26:13, 15).</p>

Doctrine	From the Bible	From Latter-day Scripture and Prophets
<p>18 Jesus is our Mediator and Advocate with the Father.</p>	<p>“For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus” (1 Timothy 2:5; see also 1 John 2:1).</p>	<p>“Lift up your hearts and be glad, for I am in your midst, and am your advocate with the Father” (D&C 29:5; see also 2 Nephi 2:27–28; D&C 45:3–5).</p>
<p>19 The Lord is the Light and the Life of the world.</p>	<p>“Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life” (John 8:12; see also Psalm 27:1; John 1:9).</p>	<p>“For verily I say unto you that I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the light and life of the world—a light that shineth in darkness and the darkness comprehendeth it not” (D&C 45:7; see also Mosiah 16:9; D&C 12:9).</p>
<p>20 Jesus can succor His people according to their infirmities.</p>	<p>“For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted” (Hebrews 2:18; see also Isaiah 53:5).</p>	<p>“And he will take upon him death, that he may loose the bands of death which bind his people; and he will take upon him their infirmities, that his bowels may be filled with mercy, according to the flesh, that he may know according to the flesh how to succor his people according to their infirmities” (Alma 7:12; see also D&C 62:1).</p>
<p>21 The Savior can change human nature.</p>	<p>“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new” (2 Corinthians 5:17; see also 1 John 5:4).</p>	<p>“Marvel not that all mankind, yea, men and women, all nations, kindreds, tongues and people, must be born again; yea, born of God, changed from their carnal and fallen state, to a state of righteousness, being redeemed of God, becoming his sons and daughters;</p> <p>“And thus they become new creatures; and unless they do this, they can in nowise inherit the kingdom of God” (Mosiah 27:25–26; see also Mosiah 5:2, 7; Alma 5:14).</p>
<p>22 The Lord has restored His original Church in the latter days.</p>	<p>“And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you:</p> <p>“Whom the heavens must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began” (Acts 3:20–21; see also Matthew 17:11).</p>	<p>“And also those to whom these commandments were given, might have power to lay the foundation of this church, and to bring it forth out of obscurity and out of darkness, the only true and living church upon the whole earth, with which I, the Lord, am well pleased” (D&C 1:30; see also D&C 20).</p>

Doctrine	From the Bible	From Latter-day Scripture and Prophets
<p>23 Jesus directs His Church through His chosen prophets.</p>	<p>“[Ye] are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone” (Ephesians 2:20).</p>	<p>“The head of the Church is the Lord Jesus Christ. It is His Church. But the earthly head is our prophet” (Gordon B. Hinckley, “The Church Is on Course,” <i>Ensign</i>, Nov. 1992, 53; see also D&C 21:1–5).</p>
<p>24 Jesus will someday return to earth.</p>	<p>“This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven” (Acts 1:11; see also 1 Thessalonians 4:16; Revelation 1:7).</p>	<p>“For I will reveal myself from heaven with power and great glory, with all the hosts thereof, and dwell in righteousness with men on earth a thousand years, and the wicked shall not stand” (D&C 29:11; see also D&C 34:6; Moses 7:62–64).</p>
<p>25 The Lord will judge the world in righteousness.</p>	<p>“He hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness” (Acts 17:31; see also Psalm 9:8; Isaiah 11:3–4).</p>	<p>“Whoso repenteth and is baptized in my name shall be filled; and if he endureth to the end, behold, him will I hold guiltless before my Father at that day when I shall stand to judge the world” (3 Nephi 27:16; see also D&C 19:1–3).</p>





Jesus Loves Me

"Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 18:4; see vv. 1–5).

Encircled in the Arms of His Love

By Lorna Lee R. Anderson

When he was only a year old, our son Nolan suffered a stroke related to complications from spinal meningitis. Now 14, he struggles with a low-pressure shunt, learning challenges, and paralysis of one side of his body.

Despite his rocky road, Nolan has surpassed our expectations. Every milestone he reaches brings us much joy. He has developed patience and a determination worthy of emulation.

My husband, Ryan, and I, along with our five other sons, have all grown spiritually from our experiences with Nolan. At times we get discouraged and worry about his future,

but then we count our blessings, recognize the love and concern our Father in Heaven and His Son have for each of us, and remember a prayer that was answered when Nolan was six.

One evening when we were unsure how to handle Nolan's challenges, my husband and I knelt to pray about his welfare. As we petitioned the Lord, we expressed particular concern about Nolan's behavior as related to his perception of his self-worth. We sincerely asked for Nolan to feel the love of our Savior and know of his great worth as a child of God.

The next morning Nolan came directly into the kitchen, where I was cooking breakfast. Before breakfast he would usually play with his brothers

or plop on the couch. But he seemed intent as he climbed a stool at the breakfast bar, looked up at me, and said, "I had a dream last night."

I sensed his seriousness, and my interest was immediately piqued.

"Really?" I asked. "What happened in your dream?"

"Jesus was there," Nolan replied simply, "and He held me."

I have a testimony that our loving Father in Heaven hears and answers our prayers and that our Savior is our advocate with the Father. They know us individually. They are aware of our needs and our capabilities. They know how to succor us.

Moroni tells us: "If ye shall ask with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in Christ, he will manifest the truth . . . unto you. And by the power of the Holy Ghost ye may know the truth of all things" (Moroni 10:4-5). I have learned that this scripture pertains not only to obtaining a testimony of the Book of Mormon but also to any question for which we are sincerely seeking an answer. When we face challenges, heartache, and trials, our hearts are keenly sincere and our intent intensely genuine.

How grateful I am to be a member of the Savior's Church, where I have learned much of His gospel through study, service, and the Holy Ghost. How grateful I am to know our Savior will help, comfort, and guide each of us. I know that we can all be encircled "in the arms of [His] love" (D&C 6:20) as we come unto Him. ■

ILLUSTRATIONS BY PAUL MANN



I Know That My Redeemer Lives

By Christy Rusch Banz
Church Magazines

As a freshman at Brigham Young University–Idaho (then Ricks College), I missed my family. But after a few months of classes, I had settled into college life and was enjoying myself. When the telephone call came, I was in my apartment, studying.

“Christy, I have some bad news for you,” my mother said, her voice

breaking. “Your father passed away tonight from a severe heart attack.”

Emotions flooded over me as I tried to comprehend what I had just heard. I had seen my father only a few days before, but I had no idea it would be for the last time. Dad’s death was a shock to our entire family; it was also a shock to my home ward. Dad was only 53 years old, and he was serving as our bishop.

The days that followed were filled with visits and phone calls from family, friends, ward members, and neighbors. We felt a tremendous outpouring of love from those around us. At Dad’s funeral, family members shared memories of our life with him, and we testified of the plan of salvation and of life after death.

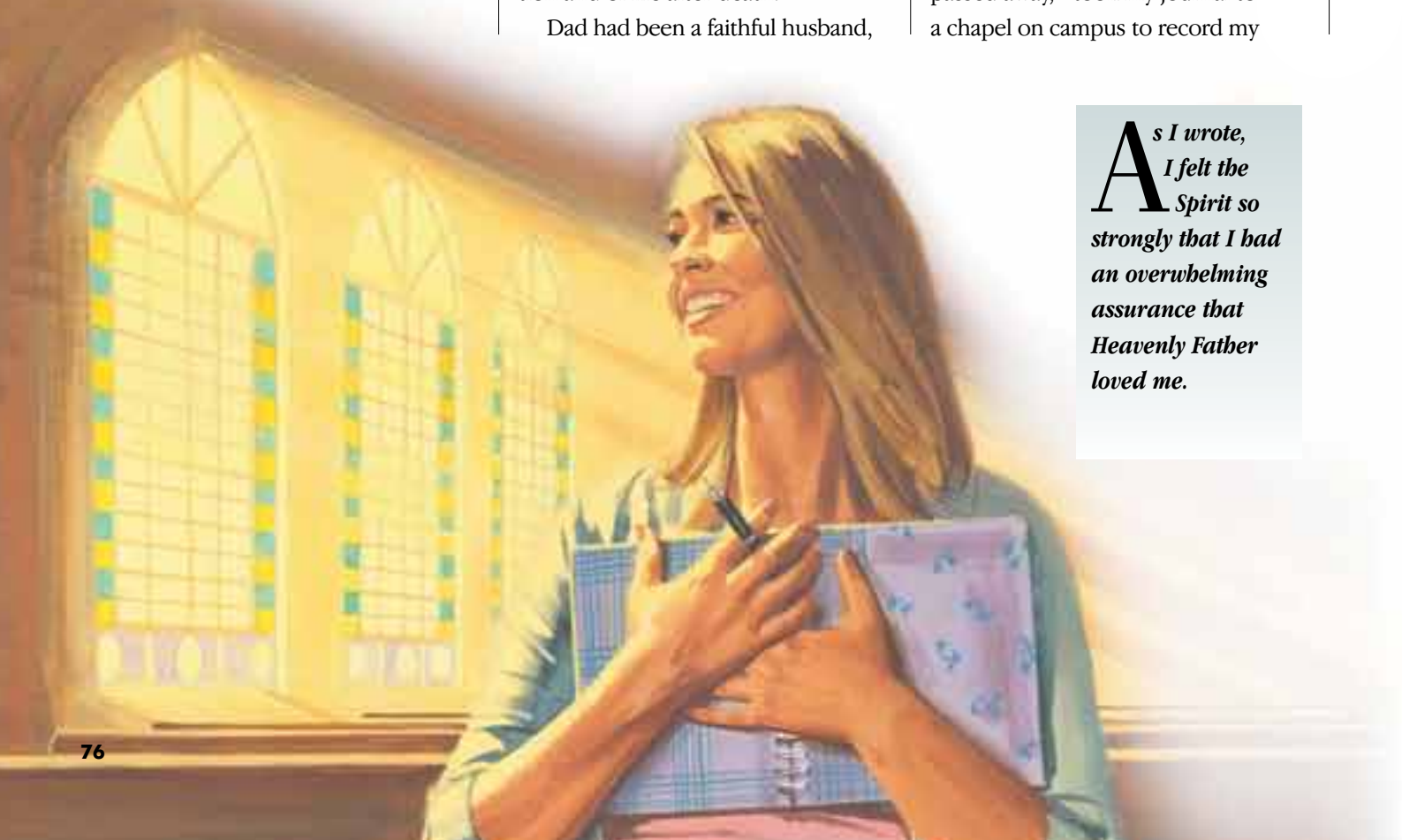
Dad had been a faithful husband,

a devoted Latter-day Saint, an avid Scouter, and a wonderful father. Many people were blessed because of the life he had lived. After the funeral my oldest brother dedicated the grave, and as a family we stood and sobbed through “I Am a Child of God” (*Hymns*, no. 301).

The day after the funeral I returned to school. I wasn’t thrilled to be back, but I knew I had to go on with life and fulfill my responsibilities. Some days were easier than others. I spent a lot of time thinking about my father, and I relied on my knowledge of the plan of salvation and my faith in Jesus Christ to help me face my challenges and questions.

About two weeks after my father passed away, I took my journal to a chapel on campus to record my

As I wrote,
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feelings and the events surrounding Dad's death. As I wrote, I felt the Spirit so strongly that I had an overwhelming assurance that my Heavenly Father loved me, that He had a plan specifically for me, and that I would never be left alone. As I finished writing, bells sounded from speakers atop the nearby student center playing the hymn "I Know That My Redeemer Lives" (*Hymns*, no. 136). Words from the hymn instantly came to my mind:

*I know that my Redeemer lives.
What comfort this sweet sentence
gives!
He lives, he lives, who once was
dead.
He lives, my ever-living Head. . . .
He lives to silence all my fears.
He lives to wipe away my tears.
He lives to calm my troubled heart.
He lives all blessings to impart.*

I do know that my Redeemer lives,
and I know He loves me. Because He

rose from the dead, I know that my father and all of our loved ones who have gone before us will also live again. What a comfort it is to know these truths. ■

My Unexpected Easter Feast

By Marianne Monson

Easter was always a special holiday while I was growing up. After church my parents would teach the family a lesson about the Atonement and Resurrection; in the evening we would have a scrumptious feast. Friends often joined us for dinner, which was both joyous and delicious. Because of these traditions, Easter became my favorite holiday—a sacred family time to celebrate the Resurrection of the Savior.

One year while studying in London, I found myself alone on Easter. My ward did not meet until late afternoon, so the morning stretched before me. I thought of my family, miles away, celebrating the day without me, and my heart felt empty and sad.

At first I wanted to indulge in self-pity, but then I began to wonder what

I could do to make the day meaningful. My mind turned to the people I passed daily in the crowded subways. As in many big cities, the subways often sheltered homeless men and women needing a handout. My heart had often been touched by their need, and I realized that



The down-trodden man clutched the sack eagerly, holding it as if it were a precious treasure.

I wasn't the only one in London spending Easter alone. Helping strangers suddenly seemed like a good way to show my gratitude for the wonderful Easters I had enjoyed as a child.

I made several sack lunches containing sandwiches, fruit, crackers, and drinks. Then I headed to the subway, searching out the people I had sometimes avoided. Most were truly grateful for the food. To each I said, "Happy Easter!"

When I had one lunch left, I came upon a man who looked particularly downtrodden. His clothes were filthy, his face was lined with suffering, and his eyes held deep sorrow. As I offered him the lunch, he looked up at me in surprise.

"What is this?" he asked.

"It's lunch, sir," I replied.

"Thank you, thank you very much," he said. His expression suddenly changed to one of joy and gratitude. He clutched the sack eagerly, holding it as if it were a precious treasure.

"You're welcome," I said, touched by the look on his face. "Happy Easter, sir."

"Happy Easter!" he replied.

As I walked home, the words of King Benjamin came to my mind: "For behold, are we not all beggars?" (Mosiah 4:19). I realized that without the Savior, all of us would be cast out, downtrodden, and left alone. But the Savior reaches out to us and offers us something we want desperately: the

hope that we can be pure, that we will live again, and that we will return to Him someday.

Faced with sin and death, I also stand before the Savior as a beggar. He reaches out to me, offering mercy. Someday when I stand before Him, my face will register profound gratitude, which I had glimpsed, in small part, on the face of this humble man.

Walking home, I began to weep. My loneliness was gone, replaced with joy and a deeper understanding of King Benjamin's words and the Savior's mercy. I silently thanked the Lord for this man's unexpected gift to me. I had offered him a simple lunch; he had returned to me a true Easter feast. ■

The Savior's Saving Hand

By Scott McCoy

One summer while I was growing up in Arkansas, my neighbors invited me to join them for a couple days of camping, fishing, and swimming at a large reservoir near Sardis, Mississippi. We spent several days enjoying all sorts of outside activities.

On our last day we were getting our final swim in before heading home. As my friends and I were throwing a beach ball back and forth, the ball sailed over my head and

landed a few feet beyond me. The wind immediately started blowing the ball away from me along the top of the water. I started after it, but the wind kept blowing the ball just beyond my reach. In a short time I had reached the markers that bordered the shallow swimming area. The ball had been blown beyond the markers toward the main body of the reservoir.

As I approached the markers, I gave little thought to swimming beyond them. The ball was not that far in front of me, and I was sure I could catch it. After all, I had completed a lifesaving course and proudly wore the course emblem on my swimming trunks. I felt comfortable in water and confident that I was strong enough to retrieve the ball.

The wind, however, continued to





Like the man
in the boat,
the Savior
came to my rescue
when I needed
Him most.

keep the ball outside my reach. Sometimes I would get so close to it that I could touch it with my fingertips, only to see it sail off again. Finally, a gust blew it far beyond my reach.

I was not aware of how far I had traveled until I stopped to rest. The water seemed much darker and colder than it was in the shallow swimming area. When I looked back toward the shore, I realized that I was close to the middle of the reservoir. I decided to abandon the beach ball and swim back to shore. I was tired and worn out, but I wasn't worried. I was young and felt that I would be all right.

But as I tried to return to shore, the wind that had assisted the beach

ball worked against me. It seemed that no matter how hard I swam, I made little progress. My arms and legs began to burn and ache. I stopped to dog paddle and float, trying to regain my strength.

Then I heard a familiar sound—the sound of a motorboat. I was happy and relieved to soon see a man in a small boat pull up beside me and offer me a ride to shore. My arms and legs were spent. I couldn't even pull myself into the boat, so I put one arm over the side and hung on while the stranger slowly towed me back to the swimming area. I grabbed one of the markers, let go of the boat, waved a thank-you, and swam to shore.

Fifteen years later I once again found myself in trouble. For a long

time I had been swimming in a reservoir of sin. Pursuing a worldly course and seeking after things of little or no value had left me floundering in deep water. My strength was spent, and my hope was failing. The things I had pursued remained just out of my reach, and darkness seemed about to engulf me.

In desperation I cried out to Heavenly Father. Like the man in the boat, the Savior came to my rescue when I needed Him most. Through a latter-day prophet of God, He led me to the Book of Mormon. He led me along the path of repentance and cleansed me of my sins in the waters of baptism. He then placed me on high ground, where I have attempted to stay ever since. ■

I'M A LATTER-DAY SAINT

When our son Nicolás was five, he went to one of the best schools in our city. The school is run by another church. Nicolás was accepted even though he wasn't a member of that church.

One day one of the school and church leaders led Nicolás out of the chapel to ask him why he didn't participate in the school's religion.

Nicolás said, "I'm a Latter-day Saint."

The man tried to convince Nicolás to change his mind, saying that all churches have truth and believe in Jesus Christ.

Nicolás replied, "My parents teach me to respect your church, but I like being a Latter-day Saint." The man accepted this answer and didn't trouble him anymore.

Nicolás is a good example, even to his parents, of following the example of Jesus Christ. ■

Luz Yesenia Moreno Rivera, Colombia

"He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (John 8:12).

A BUCKETFUL OF LOVE

After a small accident, I have to use a cane, and I walk slowly. Stairs are very hard for me. At church I always felt scared of falling down the steps—until that Sunday when I heard a soft voice and felt a little hand holding mine: "Come on. I'll go with you."

I looked down and saw nine-year-old Gabriel's confident smile.

"Very well!" I said. "From now on, you are my helper. Let's go!"

No one sent Gabriel. He just saw a grandma needing help and presented himself.

Now each Sunday, Gabriel and I go down the stairs without fear.

I later told Gabriel's parents: "It is not physical strength that makes me unafraid. It is the bucketful of love that he gives me each Sunday. Gabriel is a giant of kindness!" ■

Norma Ramos de Oliveira, Brazil



Courage, Submission, and Unwavering Love

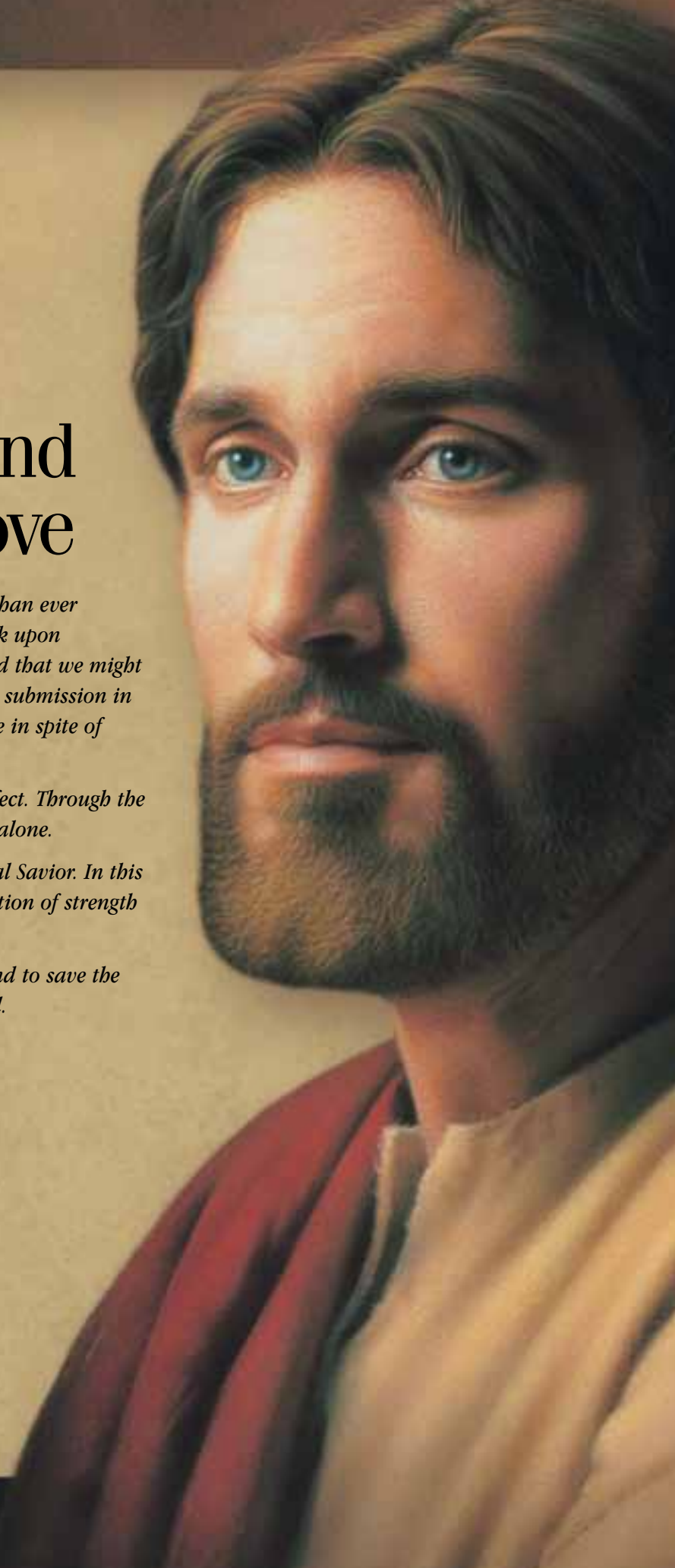
After five decades of life, I am more aware than ever before of the suffering of Jesus Christ as He took upon Himself the sins of the world and willingly died that we might live. I constantly contemplate His courage and submission in the face of opposition and His unwavering love in spite of disappointments.

He loves me, even though I am far from perfect. Through the various challenges of my life, I have never felt alone.

I am grateful for the knowledge of a personal Savior. In this troubled world, Christ is real, alive, and a bastion of strength to all who come unto Him.

God is real. He sent His Son to redeem us and to save the world from sin. For this I am eternally grateful.

Christine Roberts, New Zealand





*After the many testimonies which
have been given of him, this
is the testimony, last of all,
which we give of him: That he lives!"
(D&C 76:22).*